Saturday Evening Post · June 17, 1967 · 35c

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WHY CHILDREN COMMIT SUICIDE

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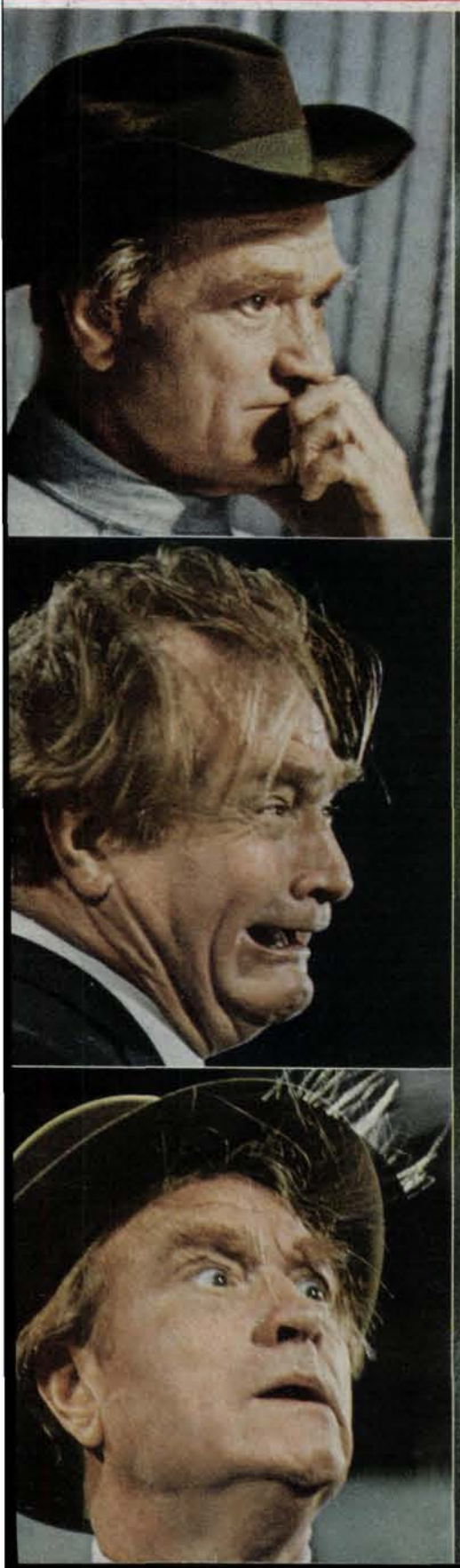
THE F-111
World's best plane
or billion-dollar mistake?

The crazy clowning of RED SKELTON



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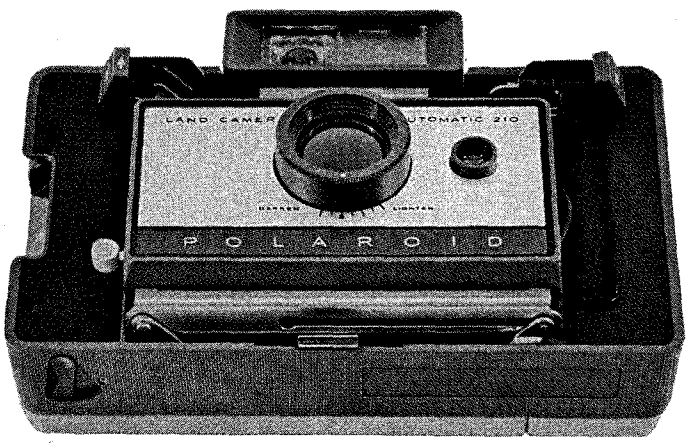

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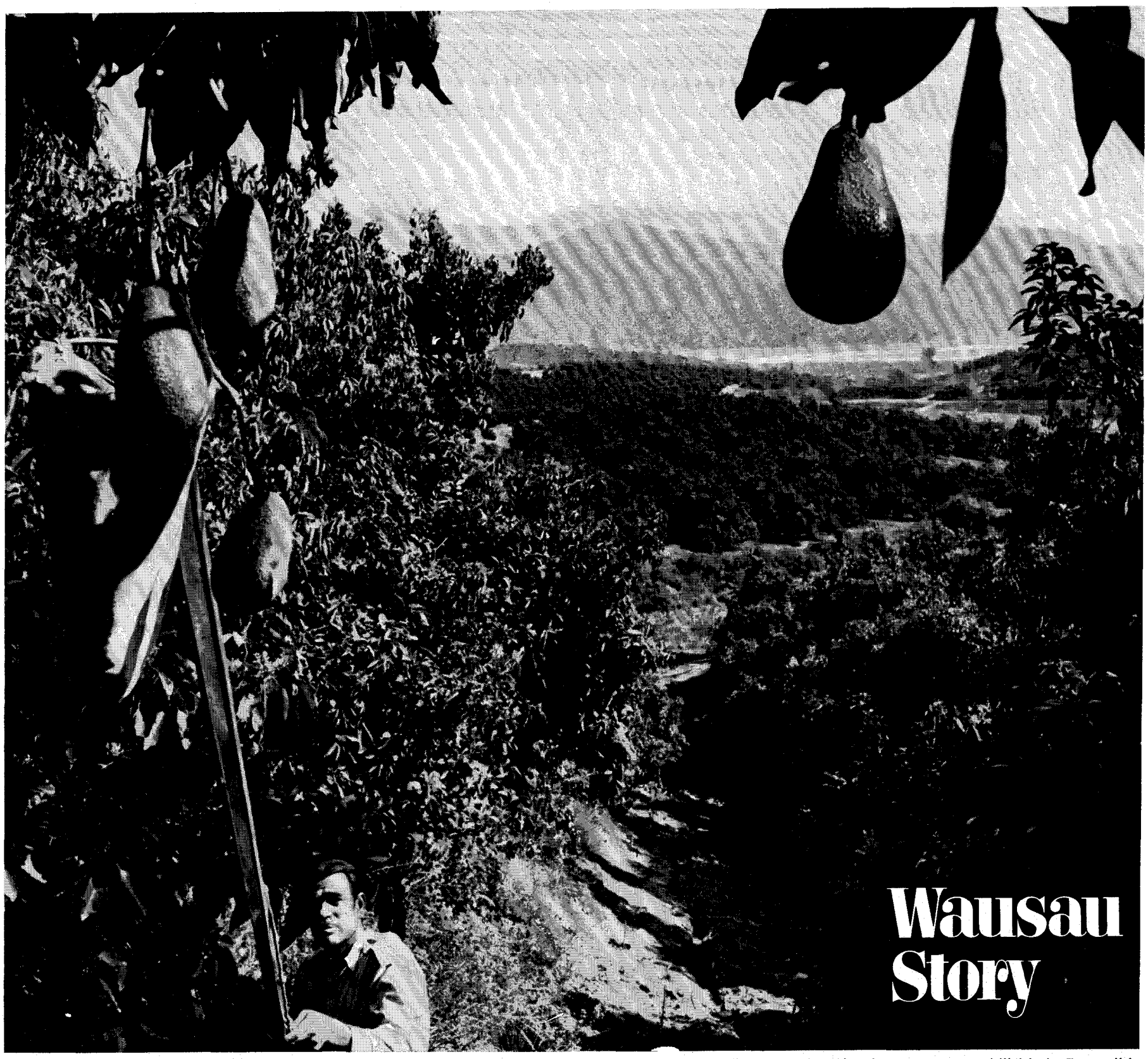

Avocados growing here on a steep hillside in Escondido
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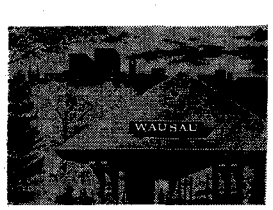

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The business-insurance people

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The Saturday Evening
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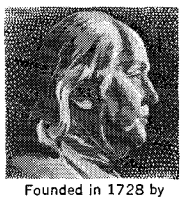

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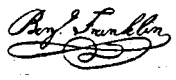

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About this issue

Request in Amish country

"The Amish don't hold with publicity," editor-at-large JOHN BIRD was told. And so for his *Post* article on the Old Order Amish, Bird carefully eased his way into their community—talking with a farmer at his plow, sitting in on Amish school lessons—and with the acceptance of his subjects, Bird's story unfolded. Contributing photographer JOHN LAUNOIS and associate photography editor SALLY REUKAUF were often suspected of being pesky tourists and asked to move on, but finally a young Amishman invited them to his home for supper—and introduced them unobtrusively into the rarely photographed round of Amish life seen in this issue. . . . At first Red Skelton refused to talk to editor-at-large BILL DAVIDSON for a *Post* article; but on the set of Skelton's TV show, the comedian did engage in audible and anecdote-laden conversations with people to the right, left, fore and aft of Davidson. After a few days of what Davidson calls "an indirect interview," Skelton relented and began to talk to the writer—directly. / Cover photo by Don Ornitz.

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Letters

Assassination probe

Gentlemen:

Hooray for James Phelan! His timely article on the assassination-plot probe [RUSH TO JUDGMENT IN NEW ORLEANS, May 6] helps to illuminate the fun and games in New Orleans.

MRS. E. S. ANDERSON
Amite, La.

Dear Sir:

James Phelan apparently wished to cast doubt on the investigation being made by Mr. Garrison, so Mr. Phelan, too, "rushed to judgment." But there are still more witnesses and trials to be followed if this investigation continues.

MRS. V. BEILBY
Shreveport, La.

Dear Sirs:

I want to congratulate you for your honest and well-written account of the Garrison investigation. I am one of a great many New Orleanians who are appalled by the tactics displayed by a district attorney who is apparently not accountable to anyone for his actions.

B. J. SMITH
New Orleans, La.

Dear Sirs:

When the New Orleans Mardi Gras clowning is finally ended, the Pagliacci who will weep may be the American people.

WYLMA G. HEARD
New Orleans, La.

Sexy little Sharon

Gentlemen:

I had wondered what had happened to all the entertaining, intelligent movies and stars of the past; and after reading SEXY LITTLE ME by John Bowers [May 6], I found out—we can hardly expect such movies from those who produce and make "stars" of people like the beautiful, pathetic Sharon Tate. I feel deeply sorry for Miss Tate and hope she "fails"—it may save her from becoming another Marilyn Monroe.

PAT COLE
Cheyenne, Wyo.

Dear Editors:

Isn't this world on its way to ruin fast enough without your helping hand? If you can't find anything better to fill your pages, just leave them blank. It would be better than turning the *Post* into another *Playboy*.

GEORGE WROZIK
Joliet, Ill.

Dear Editor:

I couldn't believe SEXY LITTLE ME was actually in the *Post*. This is the type of article you would expect to find in a magazine of disrepute. Please keep the magazine clean!

ELLEN E. MITCHELL
Madison, Ind.

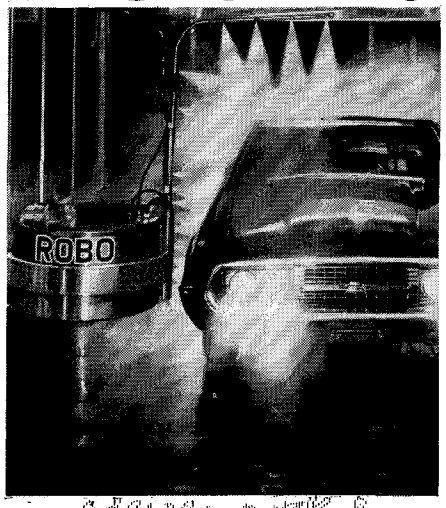
Dear Sirs:

I was not aware that the voice of "every middle-class American mother" speaks as Mrs. Tate does in regard to her daughter's fate: "I don't care—just as long as she's happy."

Well, the voices of the middle-class mothers I know *do* care—about the moral and mental fitness of their daughters.

MRS. JERRY COHEN
Blytheville, Ark.

Enter Often!



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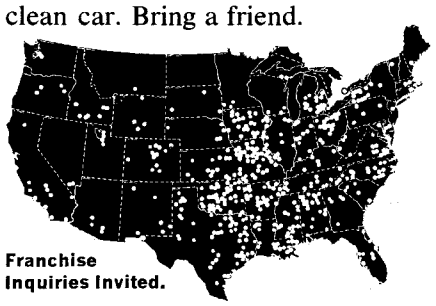

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Letters

Student Utopia

Dear Sirs:

A personal thank you to Buell G. Gallagher for his article OUR STUDENTS HAVE NO UTOPIA in the May 6 issue. I avidly agree with all he had to say, and was happy to hear of an adult standing up for the American college students.

JULIE L. SMITH
Hutchinson, Kans.

Dear Sirs:

Mr. Gallagher's article was certainly sympathetic toward the plight of today's youth, but he failed to recognize the fact that students today *do* have their own Utopia. Most of all, young people want to create a world that is without illusions, without hypocrisy, and with plenty of love and peace. Yes, Mr. Gallagher, the world we young people will inherit is in a bad state, but we have all the hope in the world that we can improve it.

LAUREEN LAUGHLIN
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Gentlemen:

Historically, college students have always tended to be unruly and rebellious. We now need immediate action to protect our colleges from destruction by the concerted forces of the lunatic fringe in the student bodies and the donkeys sitting behind the presidential desks.

RICHARD W. REES
Orange, Tex.

Gentlemen:

Mr. Gallagher will not write off the present college generation as "damaged merchandise." If there is any such merchandise, it is to be found in the generations of the '50's, when students either had no political or social beliefs or were afraid to express them lest they endanger their present or future well-being.

OSCAR D. DIKE
West Nyack, N.Y.

Golden touch

Dear Sir:

Your article about horse trainer Eddie Neloy in the May 6 issue [THE GOLDEN TOUCH by Don Parker] was wonderful, and the writer is a whiz. Could Don Parker be the son of Dan Parker, who used to write for the New York *Daily Mirror*? If so, I guess he must be a chip off the old block, since I consider Dan Parker the best sportswriter in the United States.

SIG FRUCHT
Houston, Tex.

The Parker "golden touch" apparently runs in the family. Dan and Don Parker are indeed father and son.—Ed.

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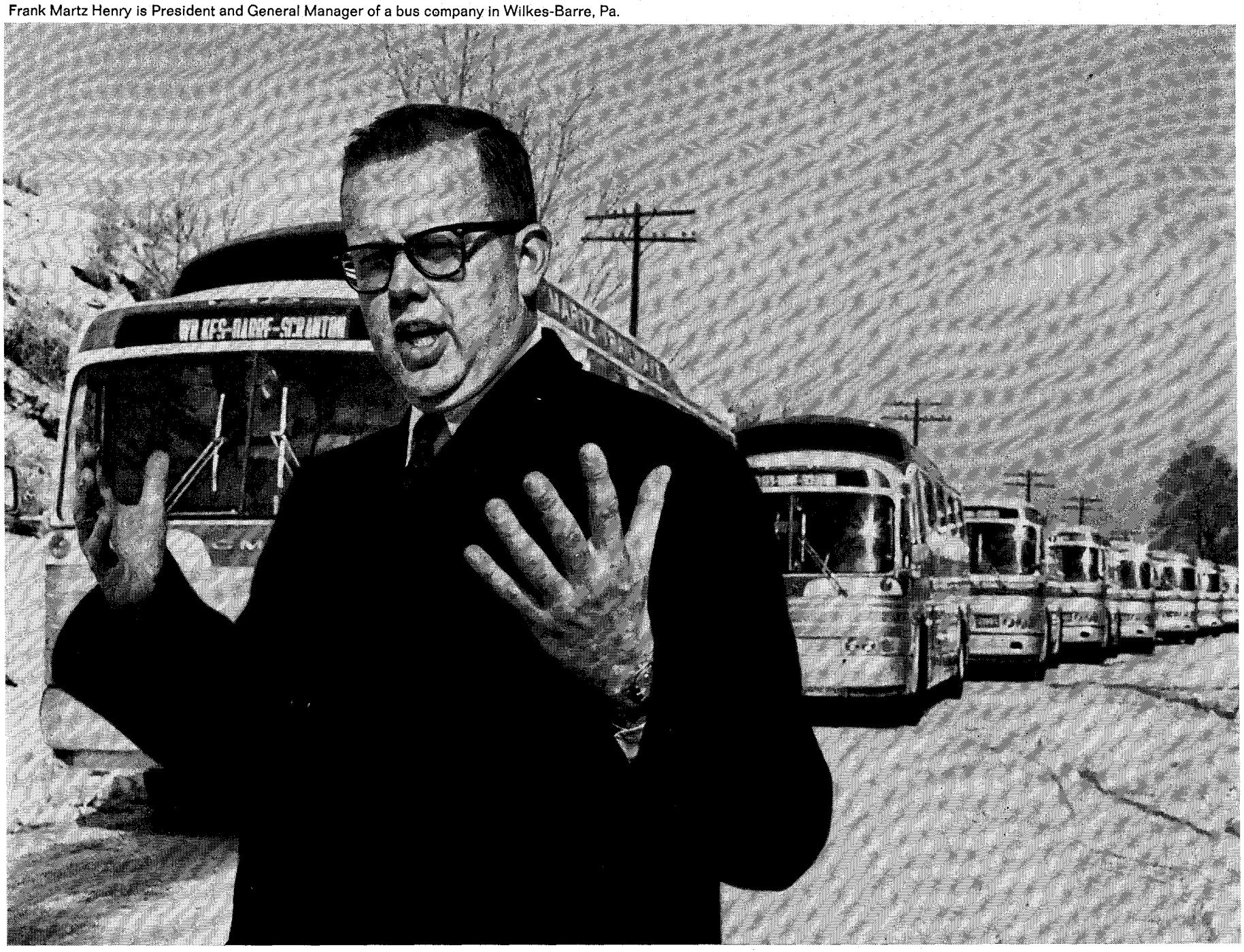
Frank Martz Henry is President and General Manager of a bus company in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



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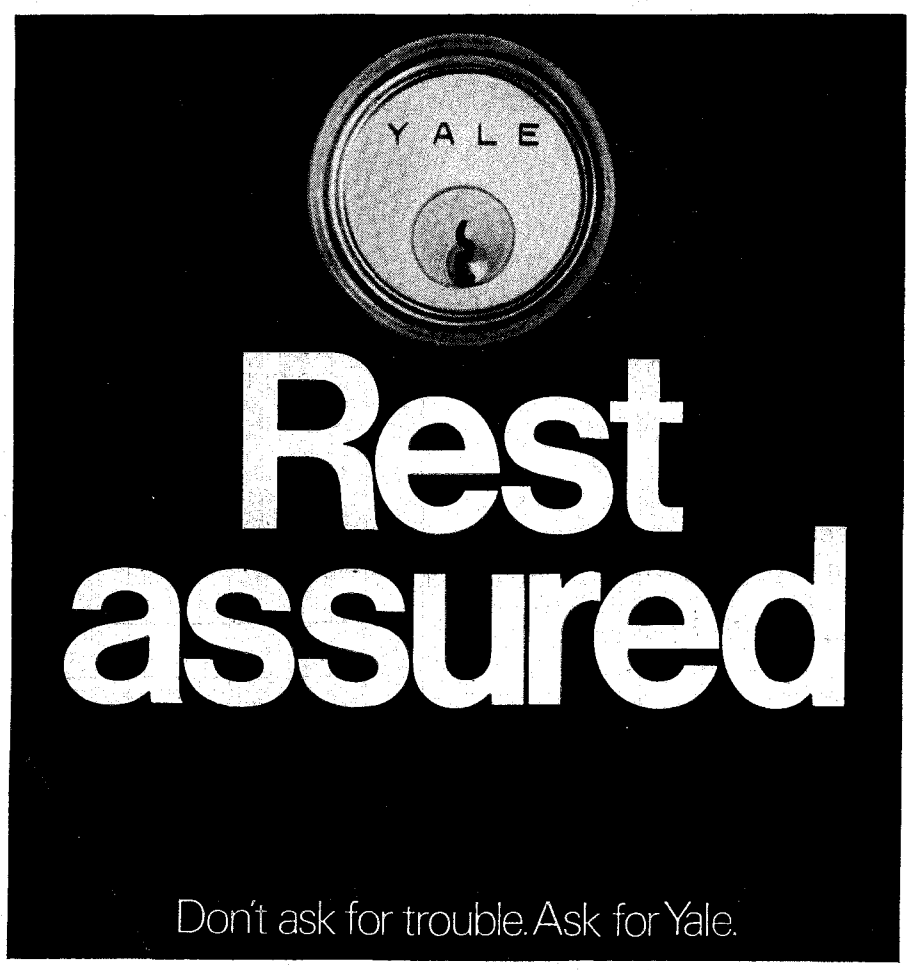

Letters

Strike!

Dear Sirs:

I have lived in Kern County, California, all of my life, and I think your story covering the attempts of the Mexican workers to organize was excellent [STRIKE! by John Gregory Dunne, May 6]. I commend your author for his work and say "*Viva,* Dunne! *Viva, Post!*"

LARRY RHOADES
Bakersfield, Calif.

Sirs:

I assumed that for American management to provide decent working conditions and decent pay wasn't just largess but self-interest—since a contented worker will produce more. My assumption, at least in the case of the California growers, was faulty.

MRS. DAN ELY
Springfield, Va.

Sirs:

We produce-growers are caught in the middle. Constantly fighting for higher prices for our produce so we can provide better working conditions for our labor, we also have to fight men like Cesar Chavez. We farmers provide the bulk of the food for the entire world—I only hope that we never get tired of fighting these labor problems and quit altogether.

GEORGE KUNTZ
Kokomo, Ind.

Gentlemen:

No other industry in this country furnishes housing for seasonal employees. Why then is the farmer expected to go into the motel business?

SUE OSTHELLER
Worley, Idaho

Dear Sir:

You have made a significant contribution to the story of Delano. But having lived for three years in the San Joaquin Valley, I would like to add that what John Dunne says of Delano can be said of a hundred other valley communities: "They think they are fighting Cesar Chavez, but they are fighting time and do not know it."

FR. PAUL HILSDALE, S.J.
Los Angeles, Calif.

Naïve L.B.J.

Dear Sir:

Stewart Alsop's article OUR NAÏVE PRESIDENT [May 6] was witty, urbane, trenchant. I enjoyed the carefully chosen bag of fireworks, the smooth words and phrases. But an afterthought teases the mind. What is Mr. Alsop's *arrière-pensée,* his hidden motive, for an almost personal unkindness that saturates the work?

BEN F. WHITEHILL
Tulsa, Okla.

Dear Sir:

Stewart Alsop's analysis is in itself quite naïve. He acts as if the course of world history can be directed by the President, and only Mr. Johnson's naïveté keeps things from turning out right and good. May I suggest your Washington correspondent not place all the responsibility on the President when "both the race problem and the war arouse deep, irrational passions."

KURT E. JOHNSON
Rock Island, Ill.

Our brothers' keepers?

Dear Editor:

In your editorial ARE WE OUR BROTHERS' KEEPERS? in the May 6 issue you pointed out the inconsistency between the Pope's plea for the poor and his hesitancy in relation to birth control. I commend you for this frank appraisal. This inconsistency is a glaring as a stately cathedral in a poverty-stricken area.

EDWARD MCCLURG
Seattle, Wash.

Gentlemen:

Your editorial aroused my Yankee individualism. It is time Americans stopped apologizing to the poor because we had ancestors with the foresight and guts to build a prosperous nation. A great man (or a great nation) does not flaunt his wealth in the face of his less fortunate neighbor, but neither does he grovel to him.

MAUREEN TRULLINGER
Portland, Oreg.

Dear Sir:

Do you really believe a survey showing that "38 percent of American Catholics now use 'artificial' birth-control devices, and 63 percent of them wish the church would formally approve" means that the Pope should change the moral laws of the church? The Pope could not change God's moral laws, even if he so desired.

A. PLEROMA
Morrisville, Pa.

Sirs:

May I suggest that Pope Paul direct the Catholic Church to pay taxes on its income, like everyone else. His concern for the poor would be more credible if the church contributed its share of taxes to the welfare state.

JOHN G. HATHAWAY
St. Clair Shores, Mich.

Dear Editor:

I am my brother's brother, and am therefore interested in him; but as for being his keeper, I want no part of it. My brothers want to keep themselves, and God help me to assist them.

A. F. GOLDSMITH
Findlay, Ohio

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They want to tamper with the Constitution

by Sen. Joseph D. Tydings

Unknown to the public and even to most members of Congress, powerful forces have been working for the past three years in state capitols across the country to lay the groundwork for a massive assault on the Constitution of the United States. Today these forces are dangerously close to success. It is time to wake up and stop this assault before it does serious damage to the most cherished principles of our democracy.

These strange circumstances are made possible by a portion of Article V of the Constitution itself, which provides that:

"The Congress, . . . on the application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several states shall call a convention for proposing amendments" (to the Constitution).

Most Americans have forgotten that this obscure provision even exists, for it has never been used throughout our history. Until now, constitutional amendments have been debated and passed in Congress in the full light of national attention, and then ratified by the states.

During the past few years, however, 32 state legislatures have passed resolutions calling for a national constitutional convention—and the ambition of the advocates is plain. They want to overturn the Supreme Court's decision that the state legislatures must be reformed according to the principle of one man, one vote. At this writing only two more legislative resolutions are needed before the proponents can claim 34 states—the necessary two thirds. They would then attempt to stampede Congress into summoning the first constitutional convention since the nation was founded.

Nobody should assume that this would be a modern replica of the meeting of the Founding Fathers in Philadelphia. This new body could claim as much authority, and yet no one knows how its members would be selected or who they would be, for the Constitution makes no provision on these points. Since no guidelines exist, I am not even certain who would attend from my own state of Maryland. But it is frequently the case in political movements that a meeting is dominated by the most active proponents. In this case, the Constitution-writing conclave could thus be dominated by narrow commercial and agricultural interests and by rotten-borough politicians who want to turn back the clock. Interests of these kinds led the way in getting the resolution passed in Maryland. The idea of such men tampering with our Constitution is enough to make Franklin, Madison, Hamilton and Washington turn in their graves.

This drive must not be allowed to succeed. It would open a Pandora's box from which could emerge all manner of drastic changes in our Government, including the crackpot ideas of the extremists. It could put into jeopardy our basic liberties—even the Bill of Rights itself. Sen. Sam Ervin of North Carolina, one of the Senate's most respected conservative leaders and a distinguished constitutional lawyer, has described the prospect succinctly: "The specter of a new convention dabbling with the greatest document ever devised by the hand of man is unthinkable."

The spark which touched off all this was the 1964 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court that state legislatures must be reapportioned to represent the people of a state rather than its cows, trees and boulders. This one-man, one-vote ruling was long overdue, but it naturally aroused the antagonism of those whose power was to be eroded or even destroyed. These opponents included rural legislators whose jobs were to be eliminated by fair apportionment. They included the special-interest groups, which long had prospered by pulling strings in legislatures that were unfairly apportioned.

These groups initially sought passage of a constitutional amendment—the "Dirksen Amendment"—by the congressional route. This amendment would have exempted at least one house of each state legislature from the "one-man, one-vote" decision, and my first speech in the Senate was made in opposition to the proposal. In the next two years, the Senate was subjected to a high-powered campaign directed by the California-based political public-relations firm of Whitaker & Baxter. The Senate rejected the proposed amendment both in 1965 and 1966—and thought the issue was settled.

In the meantime, however, these advocates were quietly at work trying to circumvent Congress. In statehouse after statehouse, resolutions demanding a convention that would prevent the one-man, one-vote rule were approved—but not in a manner that could be called, by any stretch of the imagination, democratic. Twenty-six of the 32 resolutions were passed by legislatures that were so malapportioned that they have since been reformed.

In almost every case, moreover, the resolution calling for the convention was passed hurriedly, without hearings or adequate debate. The public was not consulted and its voice was not heard as the legislation was hustled through.

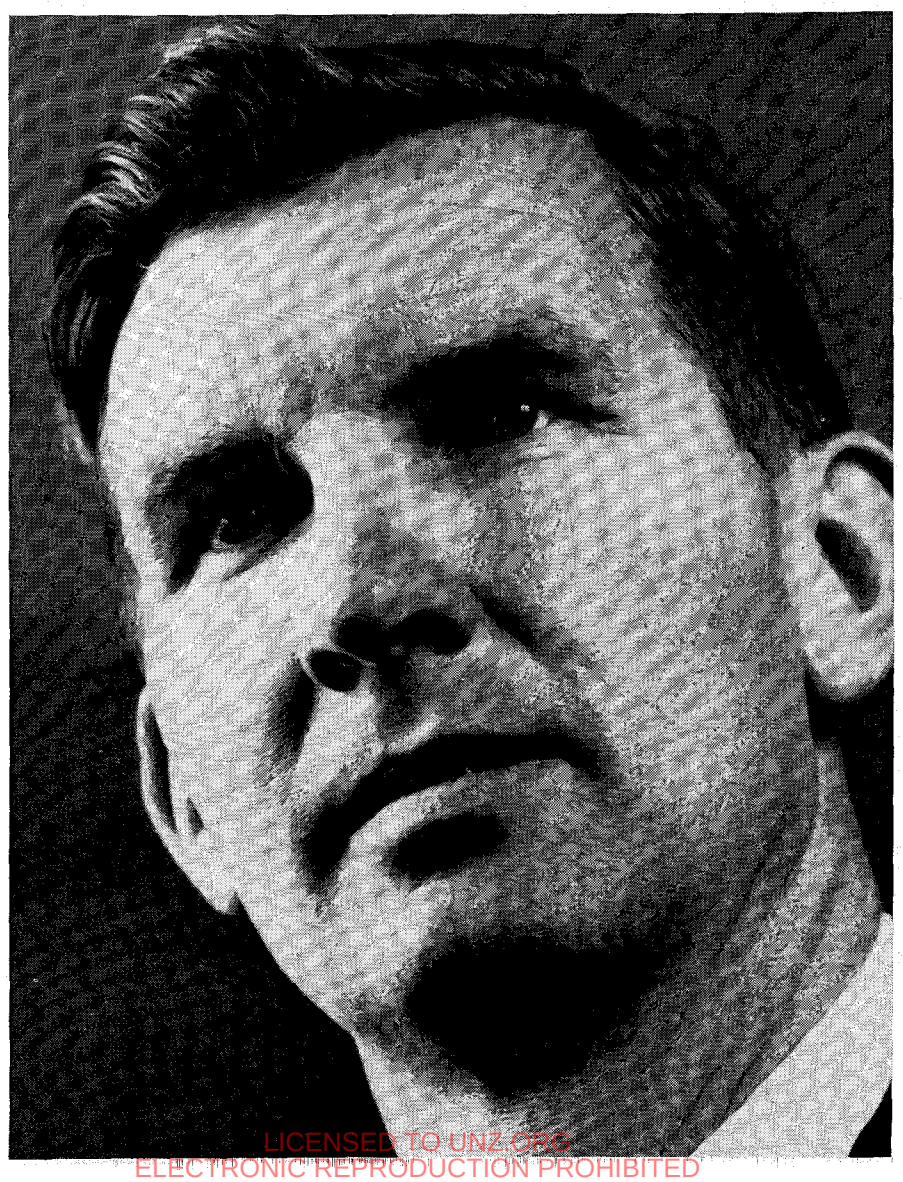
In Colorado, for example, the resolution was not even printed, as bills normally are, nor was it screened by committee, another traditional step in the legislative process. What happened in Illinois is illustrative: The resolution was introduced in the House, a motion was made to suspend the rules, thus cutting off debate, and another resolution quickly followed, calling for the vote. When the resolution reached the Illinois Senate, a hearing was held—but with only 24 hours' public notice.

Such resolutions represent an incredible defiance of popular will. The people of New Hampshire actually voted 150,179 to 43,837 in November of 1964 in favor of reapportioning the state Senate. Yet seven months later—before reapportionment could be carried out—the New Hampshire legislature swiftly and almost casually passed a call for a national constitutional convention designed to block what the people had demanded. The resolution passed the New Hampshire House of Representatives by a voice vote and was hand-carried to the state Senate. There it was adopted within minutes, without any discussion.

I am confident that if the people of the 32 states had been given the right to vote on this issue, few of these resolutions would have passed. According to the Lou Harris poll of last November 14, Americans approve the "one-man, one-vote" decision by more than 3 to 1.

There are clear indications that many state lawmakers who voted for such resolutions, or failed to object, believed that a constitutional convention would be strictly limited to the job of undercutting the one-man, one-vote rule. This ambition is objectionable enough, but the legislators who call for the convention do not seem to realize what can happen if they succeed.

Nobody can guarantee that a new constitutional convention, once in session, would be limited by law or inclination from making whatever changes it should see fit *(continued on page 14)*



Son of a U.S. senator from Maryland, the late Millard E. Tydings, the author himself has been a senator since 1965. A Democrat, he previously served for seven years in his state's legislature. He is writing a book about how the Senate works.

One measure of a democracy's strength is the freedom of its citizens to speak out—to dissent from the popular view. Although the editors often disagree with the opinions expressed in Speaking Out, they dedicate the series to that freedom.

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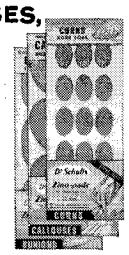

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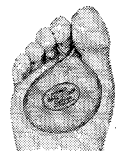

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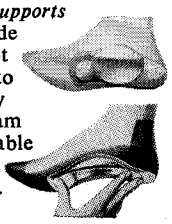

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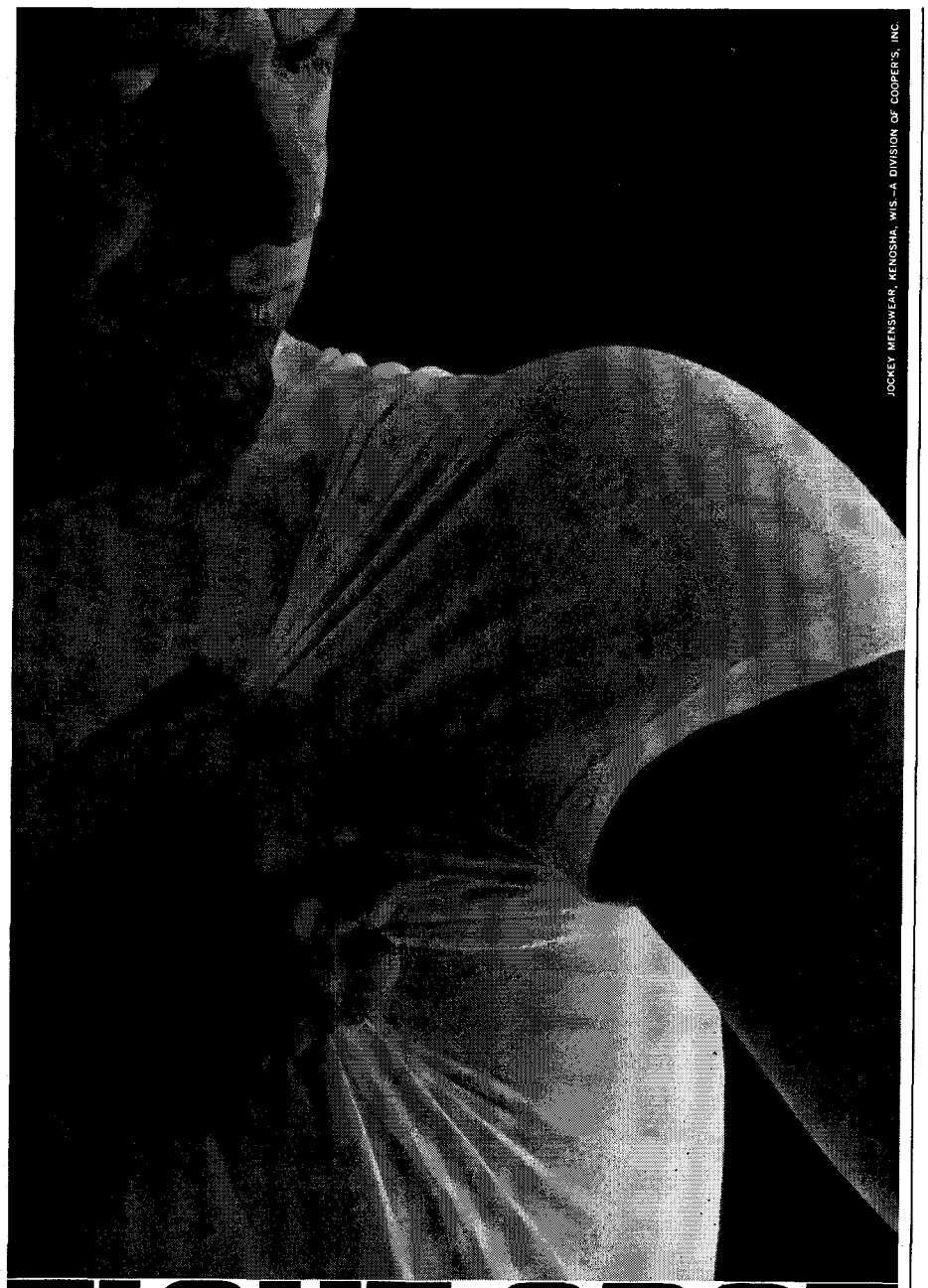

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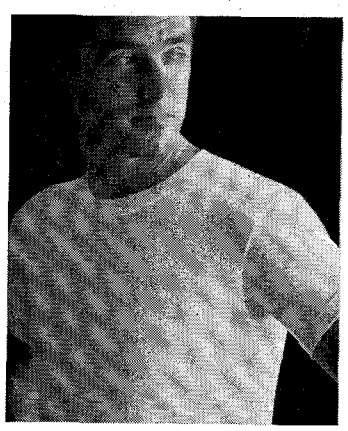

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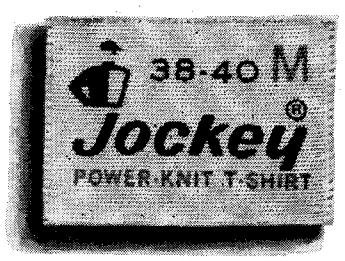


(continued from page 10)

in our national charter. Even Senator Dirksen of Illinois, the chief proponent of the convention, has said that "there is strong legal opinion that once the states have mandated a convention, the courts nor the executive can control it, guide it or establish matters with which it would deal." Most scholars on the subject agree that a convention would be unlimited.

The only Constitution-writing session we have ever had turned out to be completely unlimited, despite all attempts to restrain it. That original Constitutional Convention was called into being by the Colonies' Continental Congress in February, 1787, "for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." The Founding Fathers simply ignored this restriction, threw out the Articles of Confederation, and established a whole new system on the theory that the Constitutional Convention, as the preamble indicates, could speak for "We, the People of the United States." Some delegates, in fact, violated their states' instructions by eliminating the one-state, one-vote rule of the Confederation in favor of the two-house Congress we have today.

At first glance it can be reassuring to suppose that any amendment conjured up by the modern would-be Washingtons and Madisons would be subject to still another constitutional provision. Our charter does say that such an amendment would have to be submitted for ratification by three fourths of the states. But even that is not certain to happen. What is to keep a convention, carried away by its own wisdom, from changing the portions of the Constitution which deal with amendment procedure? The sobering prospect is that once these men sit down, behind closed and locked doors if they so wish it, there is nothing to prevent them from perusing every sentence in the Constitution, and changing it to suit their taste.

Fortunately, it is not yet too late to act to prevent such a calamity.

First, those 32 state legislatures which have wittingly or unwittingly called for a constitutional convention can repeal their resolutions and notify Congress of that fact. These states are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming. Citizens in these states should demand that their legislators reconsider these resolutions and put them to the test of public debate. In my own state, when the alarm was sounded this year in the last weeks of the legislative session, a repeal measure overwhelmingly passed the Senate and was sponsored by more than half the members of the House—but died as the timetable of the session ran out. Given public exposure, I doubt these resolutions would survive in any state.

Second, citizens in states where convention resolutions are pending should speak out now to make sure they do not pass. At this writing, these states are Delaware, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Wisconsin. Unless protest is made, two of these resolutions could slip by almost unnoticed—as has often been the case before.

Should an aroused citizenry fail to turn the tide against the proposed constitutional convention, there is one final safeguard: the Congress. In my view, Congress should simply refuse to permit this convention until confronted by 34 identical, valid petitions from state legislatures. So far 29 of the 32 resolutions call for throttling the "one-man, one-vote" principle in one way, while three others seek a totally different method. Congress should refuse action until confronted with 34 petitions which ask for the same thing.

Congress should reject as unlawful 26 of the petitions for another, more fundamental reason. Every first-year law student knows the basic principle of Equity Law that a claimant "must come into court with clean hands" before the court will hear his claim. In my judgment, no illegally apportioned legislature has "clean hands" in calling for a constitutional convention to legitimatize its own illegality.

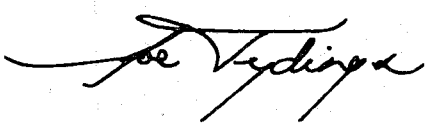
Of all the state legislatures that have asked for a convention, only six fairly represented their people at the time. The other 26 were apportioned for minority control. For example, when New Mexico's legislature asked for a convention in February, 1965, a majority in its Senate represented only 15 percent of that state's people and a majority in its House represented only 27 percent. In Florida, when the constitutional-convention resolution was passed in June of 1965, a majority of its Senate represented 12 percent of the population, and a majority of the House, 14 percent. All 26 of these legislatures have subsequently been replaced by legislatures apportioned on the one-man, one-vote principle.

It is absurd to say that these legislatures spoke for their people. Congress has no reason to act on such illegal petitions. I believe Congress has no right to permit a convention in flagrant violation of democratic procedures and against the will of most Americans.

The threat to our system of government posed by this drive for a constitutional convention is not a partisan issue. We all have a vital stake in protecting the commonweal against assault.

Our Constitution is a remarkably viable and durable instrument. Since its adoption and the approval of the Bill of Rights, we have amended it only 15 times, and each time only after reasonable debate and in orderly procedure. It has served us well as we grew from a coastal enclave of a few million people to the greatest and most powerful nation on earth, with a population of almost 200 million, a gross national product approaching a trillion dollars and the role of leader in a world our grandfathers would hardly recognize.

Our individual liberties—based squarely on our Constitution—are the pride and envy of the world. It is disgraceful that a last-gasp attempt to perpetuate malapportionment should threaten our fundamental charter. It is shocking that this stratagem has gone so far while most of us—including most of us in Congress—weren't looking. There is yet time for this to be halted and reversed. That time is now.



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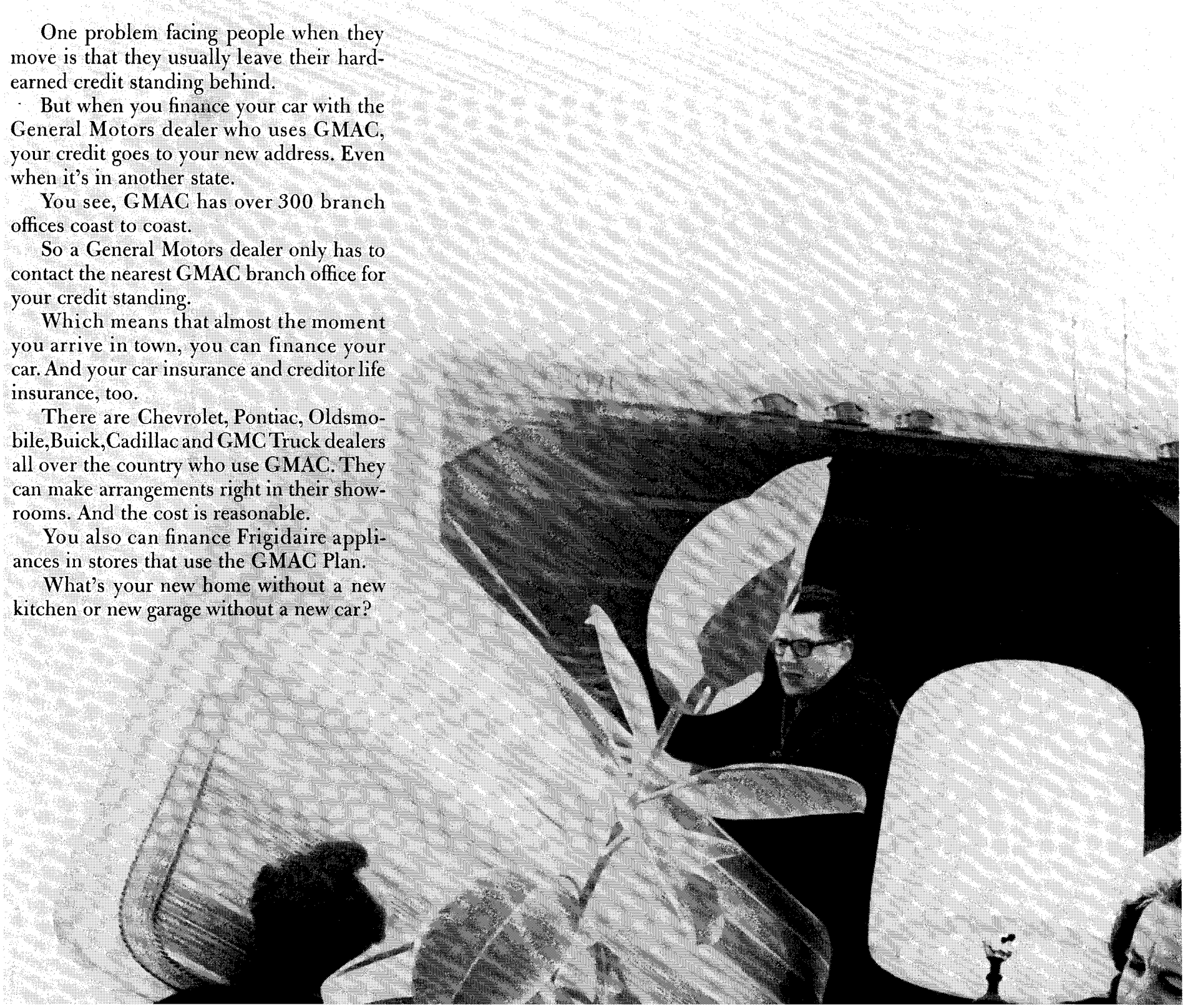

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■ Affairs of State, by Stewart Alsop

'Neither will I again smite every thing living'

WASHINGTON:

There is an oddly frightening passage in the Old Testament. It is in Genesis, in the part where Noah and Noah's family, sole human survivors of the flood, have come to rest in their ark on Mount Ararat. God appears and makes a promise to Noah:

"I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

This is lovely poetry, but as a promise it seems curiously equivocal, especially in view of what God says next: "This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud. . . . And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my convenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. . . ."

The rainbow, the token of God's covenant, is a symbol of hope. But when I read these words recently (I am not very religious, but I like to read the Bible), they conjured up an image of a symbol of our times—the atomic cloud that has hovered over the earth for more than 20 years.

If a Washington reporter is to make any sense at all about defense issues, he has to learn the basic facts about nuclear weapons. Ever since I first began learning those facts, it has seemed to me that there was something odd, and eerie, about the way the new weapons have come into being. It is almost as though a ghostly hand had been opening, one after another, doors that had seemed forever closed, crooking a bony, beckoning finger every time. With every door that has been opened, the time has come closer when a few men, pushing a few buttons, can destroy all men.

First there was the bomb itself. The Manhattan District project, which made the bomb, was a gigantic gamble with an unproved theory. Some good scientists—Dr. Merle Tuve, for example—thought it was a bad gamble. But it paid off handsomely. One bomb, called the Thin Man, killed 78,150 people at Hiroshima, and another, called the Fat Man, did almost as well at Nagasaki, killing 73,884 people.

And so the first door was opened. The next doors were the hydrogen bomb and the intercontinental ballistic missile. It is forgotten now, but at the time, both doors seemed firmly and forever closed. In theory, of course, the scientists knew that a hydrogen or fusion bomb—a weapon of "open-ended," or potentially infinite, power—could be made.

But only in theory. To act as the percussion cap on a fusion bomb, a fission bomb of no less than 500 kilotons—the equivalent of 500,000 tons of high explosive—would be required, and the power of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombs was less than 20 kilotons. Most of the scientists doubted that the atomic bomb could be made much more powerful.

But the scientists were smart, and they found ways to increase the power of the bomb, first to 30 kilotons, then to 80, then to 400, at last to 500. Then the hydrogen bomb became possible in theory, and Edward Teller and a few others urged President Truman to approve the equivalent of another Manhattan District project to make it.

Truman turned for advice to his scientific advisory committee, star-studded with names like Oppenheimer, Rabi, Conant and DuBridge. No, they unanimously told the President—that door could not and should not be opened. But Teller had his way. The particular kind of bomb he wanted to make never was and no doubt never will be made. But the door was opened all the same, in a way more terrible than Teller and his colleagues had anticipated.

The first hydrogen bomb, tested at Eniwetok on November 1, 1952, was very much more powerful than the scientists had calculated. And it trailed behind it a death-dealing fallout of radioactive particles, a phenomenon that none of the scientists had fully anticipated. With fallout it was possible to kill, not in the tens of thousands, as at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but in the tens of millions. And so that door was opened, and the bony finger beckoned.

The opening of that door opened another. In the second war, the Germans had invented the first operational ballistic missile—the V-2. In the 1940's some scientists wanted to get to work on a ballistic missile of intercontinental range. They wanted a weapon that could deliver an atomic warhead halfway around the world in 18 minutes or so, replacing the vulnerable manned aircraft, and creating a weapons system against which there could be no effective defense.

Dr. Vannevar Bush, the most respected scientist of the era, dismissed the idea as ridiculous—he was sure that the accuracy-weight-range-power problem was insoluble. Most of his colleagues agreed with him. But the hydrogen bomb, by vastly increasing the kill area, helped to solve the problem. In the 1950's, the intercontinental ballistic missile, which Bush had dismissed as an idle dream, became a grim reality. And so that door was opened too.

Other doors have been opened since. The solid-fueled missile, for example, capable of being fired accurately even underwater, has made an effective defense against a nuclear-missile attack impossible, even in theory. Above all, ways have been found to make more and more powerful nuclear warheads more and more cheaply. And so the doors have gone on opening, at first only to the United States and Russia, then to Britain, France, Communist China, with more to come.

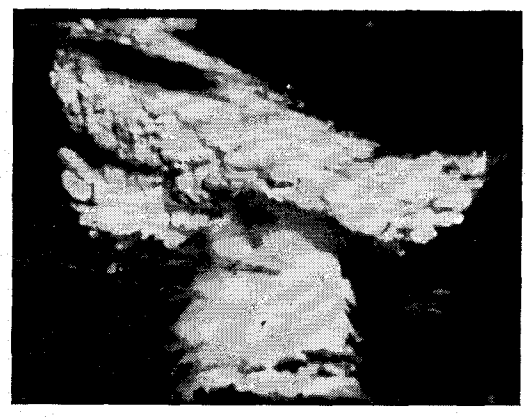
The doors open on death. At Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there were just over 150,000 deaths—which is a lot of dead people. According to current estimates, in a full nuclear exchange, deaths in this country alone would be on the order of 150,000,000. As those three added zeros suggest, the death on which the doors open is on so vast a scale as to be almost unimaginable. It is open-ended death.

Curiously, writers rarely write about this subject any more, and people hardly ever talk about it. Perhaps Damocles, after a while, learned to pretend that the sword was not there. It is useless to argue with the inevitable, and it is clear by now that there really is no way to close those doors that have been opened.

There seems to have been something foreordained about the whole curious door-opening process, as though it had been dictated by natural forces—or by God. Perhaps it has been foreordained. When the balance of nature has been overturned in a biological community, natural forces (or God) always correct it, by epidemics, or starvation, or the introduction of predators, or by some other means.

An atomic scientist, Dr. Ralph Lapp, has calculated that at current birth rates as many people will be born in the next century as in all the previous 20 centuries, thus wholly upsetting the global balance of nature. "It looks to me," Lapp says, "like a race between the pill and the bomb." Perhaps the pill will win. Otherwise, we descendants of Noah can only hope that when God brings that "cloud over the earth," He will remember His promise, and that He will not "smite *every* thing living."

Stewart Alsop



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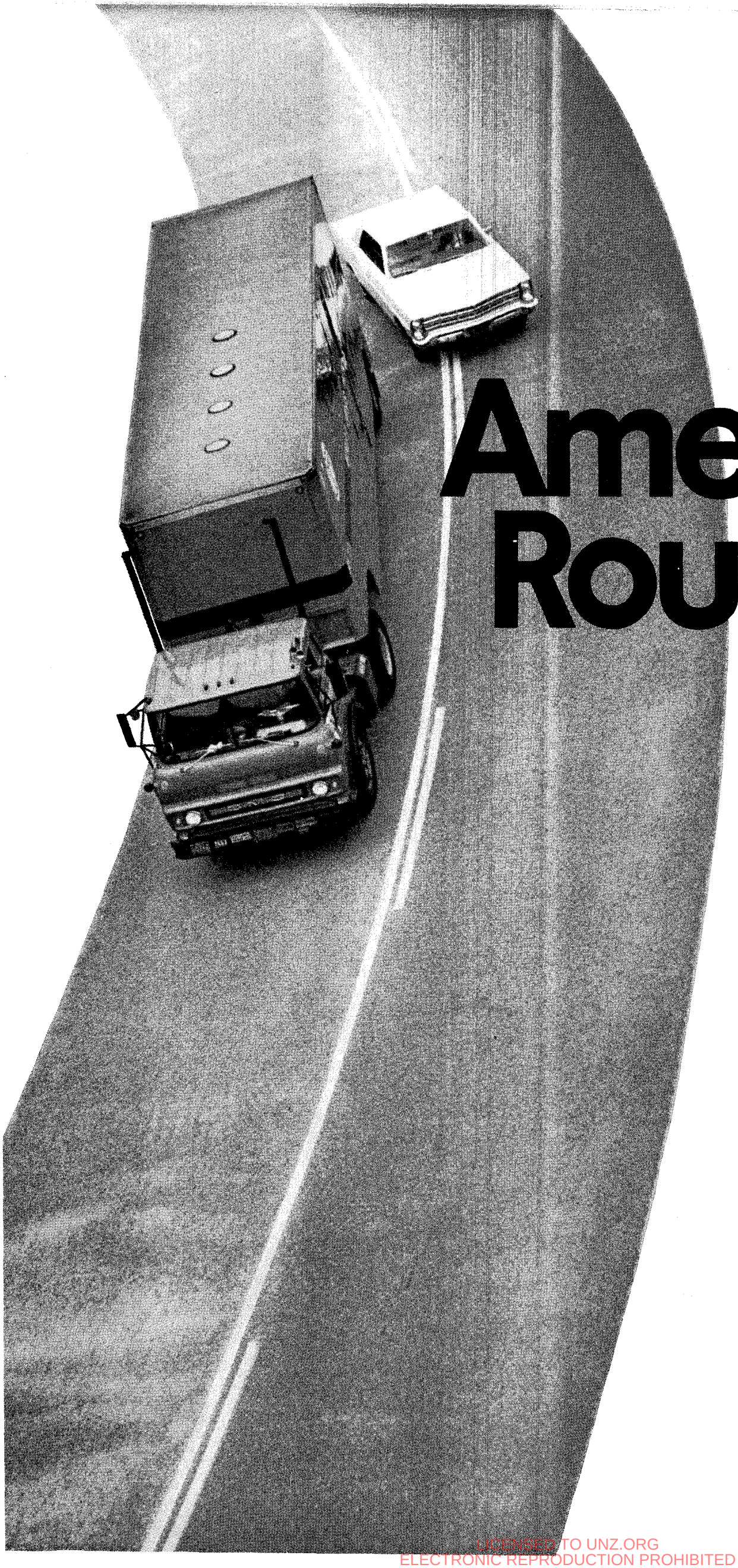

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GAMBLE	POSSIBLE GAIN	POSSIBLE LOSS
Necking and driving	Added kicks	Your life
A few drinks for the road	A relaxed feeling	Your life
Refusing to pull over when you're sleepy	Proof of manhood	Your life
First out of the parking lot	Victory	Your life
Bulling the slowpokes out of your lane	King of the road	Your life
Riding another month on bald tires	Nothing	Your life

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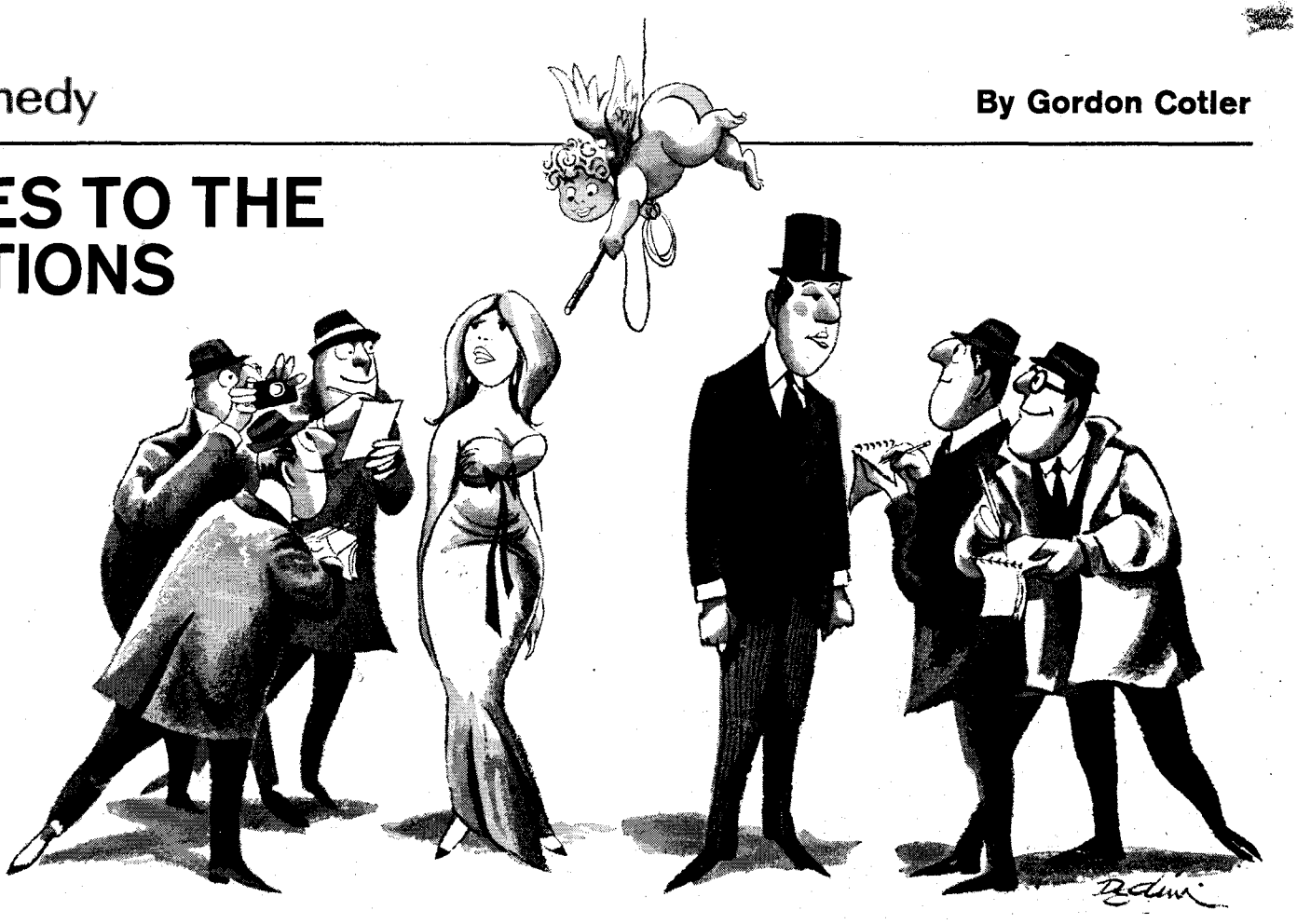
By Gordon Cotler

LOVE COMES TO THE UNITED NATIONS



The No. 1 social news of the United Nations diplomatic season here in New York, the announcement of the forthcoming marriage of Ronald Rhutebagha, elder son of the ambassador of T——, to Miss Angela Stokes-Gobb, daughter of the foreign secretary of G——, uniting two of diplomacy's oldest and most respected families, caught Washington, Whitehall, the Quai d'Orsay and the Kremlin completely by surprise yesterday. Now that the cat is out of the bag, the well-kept secret of Angela and Ronald's courtship, an appealing story of love's unfolding, can be told.

The young people met in February when both attended with their parents a U.N. function at the Waldorf-Astoria. They danced twice and spent a few minutes in each other's company near the punch bowl. In answer to his mother's question in the car going home, "How did you get on with the Stokes-Gobb girl?" Ronald murmured, "We see eye to eye on a number of issues." Responding to a similar query from her parents, Angela said, "We explored several areas of mutual interest." Pressed for details, she would only add, "I'm sorry, but Mr. Rhutebagha and I have agreed not to make separate statements," before disappearing into her room.

Ronald and Angela met informally several times during the following weeks, mostly on neutral ground in the area of Columbia University, where Ronald is a graduate student in the School of International Affairs. Emerging from Riverside Park toward the close of one such meeting, they were confronted by Sir Hedley and Lady Stokes-Gobb, who happened, quite by accident, to be passing. Addressing themselves to a direct question, the young people announced through Ronald, after conferring briefly, that this was Riverside Park's peak season for firefly viewing, and that the two had been indulging a common interest. Encountered one evening a week later by Lady S.-G. as they stepped from a car that had been parked on Morningside Drive for some time, the young people would only say, before departing on separate engagements, that progress was being made in several areas.

Friends of the family observed that lights burned late that night and for several nights thereafter in a study at the Stokes-Gobb country residence in New Rochelle, and that there was much going in and coming out of older Rhutebaghas. No member of either family was available for comment, but a spokesman on the kitchen staff denied that the house was the scene of unusual activity. "The Stokes-Gobbs always do out their closets at this time of year," he said.

Shortly after this, Ronald's father, G.B.D. Rhutebagha, asked him at lunch, "What exactly is there between you and the Stokes-Gobb girl?" In reply, Ronald said, "Let me answer your question in this way. Although Miss Stokes-Gobb and I have no traditional ties, there is not, on the other hand, any reason we should not continue to encourage the genuine warmth that has never failed to be present between us in the course of a good many fruitful conversations." And with that he excused himself to hurry off to school.

Less than a week after this exchange, Ronald was seen in the area of the jewelry center on West 47th Street—in pursuit, he firmly stated to the friend of his mother who buttonholed him—of a pair of gold cuff links for his father's birthday. It can now be revealed that the real object of his trip was an engagement ring, and that he gave it to Angela the following evening at a prearranged rendezvous, swearing her to "Eyes Only" until his graduation six weeks hence.

There followed almost immediately an admitted error of judgment on Ronald's part. To confound the curious, he made a point of appearing in public a night or two later with Mlle. Maude Verdoux, the young niece of the minister of M——. An account reached Angela within the hour. The following afternoon Ronald's Columbia roommate accepted from a messenger a small jewel box addressed to Ronald, across the wrapping of which was scrawled, "I hate you, hate you, hate you! I never want to see you again. A.S.-G." On handing this to Ronald, the roommate remarked, "I guess this washes you up with Angie, eh, Ronnie?" His face impassive as he unwrapped his engagement ring, Ronald replied, "I would prefer to withhold comment until I have had an opportunity to study the message at greater length."

During the next tension-filled week, the only indication to outsiders of the strain the young couple was undergoing was Ronald's reply to his mother's anxious query, "How are things between you and Angie, dear?" Through tight lips he said, "We are maintaining a dialogue." In point of fact, there was no dialogue. At the core of the difficulty was Angela's refusal to take back the ring until she had received a satisfactory explanation from Ronald of his behavior, while Ronald would not explain his behavior until Angela took back the ring on faith. Numerous attempts through intermediaries to effect a compromise failed. Ronald's roommate met twice with Angela's cousin, Lady S.-G.'s sister sent a note to Ronald's brother, Angela's piano teacher spent an hour on the phone with Ronald's faculty adviser, and the Rhutebagha cook had lunch with the Stokes-Gobb milkman, all to no avail.

The happy ending that is now history was a result of forces not yet completely understood even by those close to the situation. Some credit the tact and wisdom of Angela's mother, others the behind-the-scenes maneuvering of Ronald's father. Still another group of observers points to the influence of a third force, Mlle. Maude Verdoux, who almost gained the unwanted ring by default. In any event, when the fog lifted in New Rochelle last Thursday, there stood Ronald and Angela on the Stokes-Gobb back porch to make the breathlessly awaited announcement of their engagement. The big day will be in mid-June, and we think we can say without fear of contradiction that the young couple will prove a stimulating addition to the world diplomatic community. □

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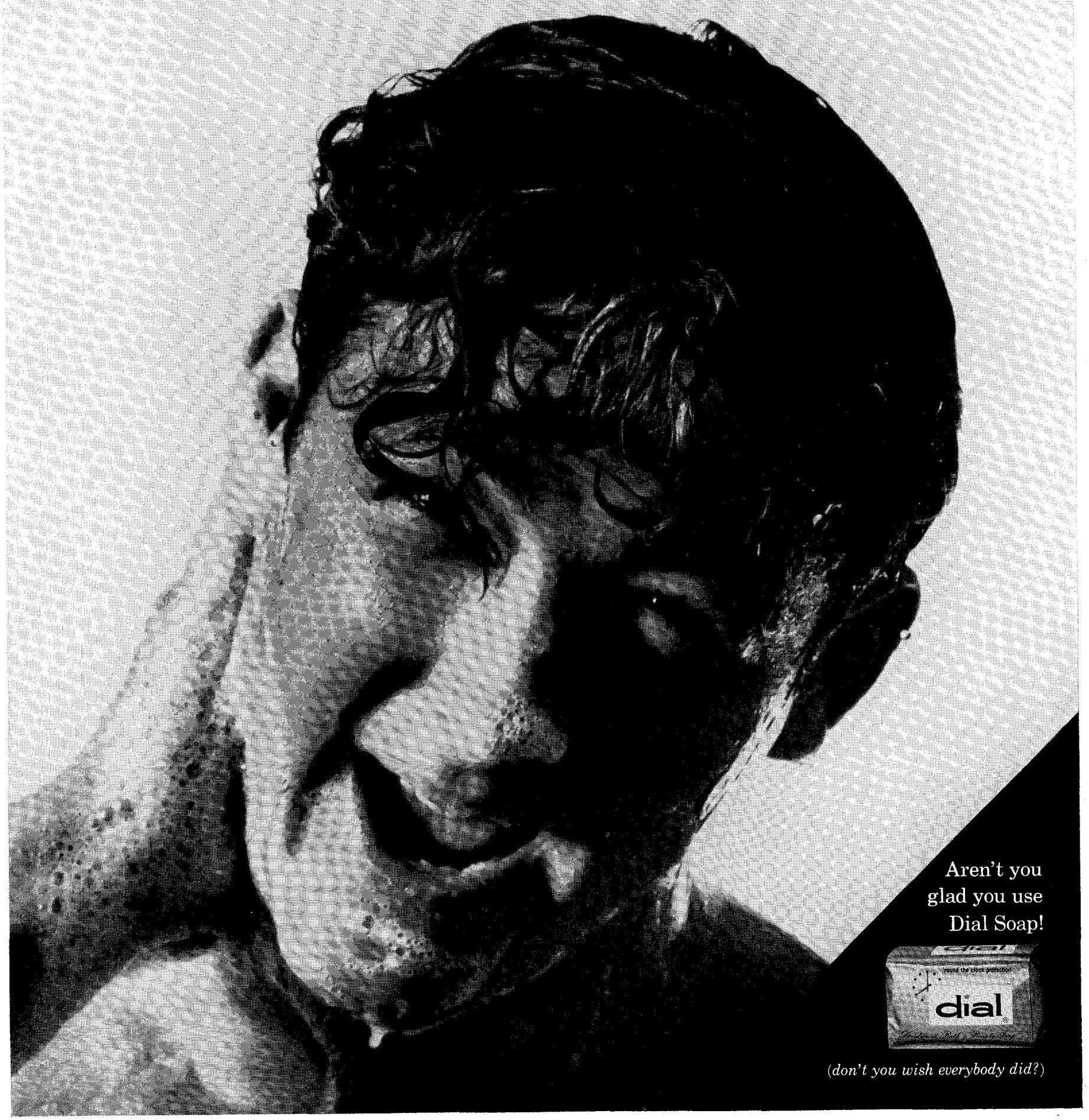

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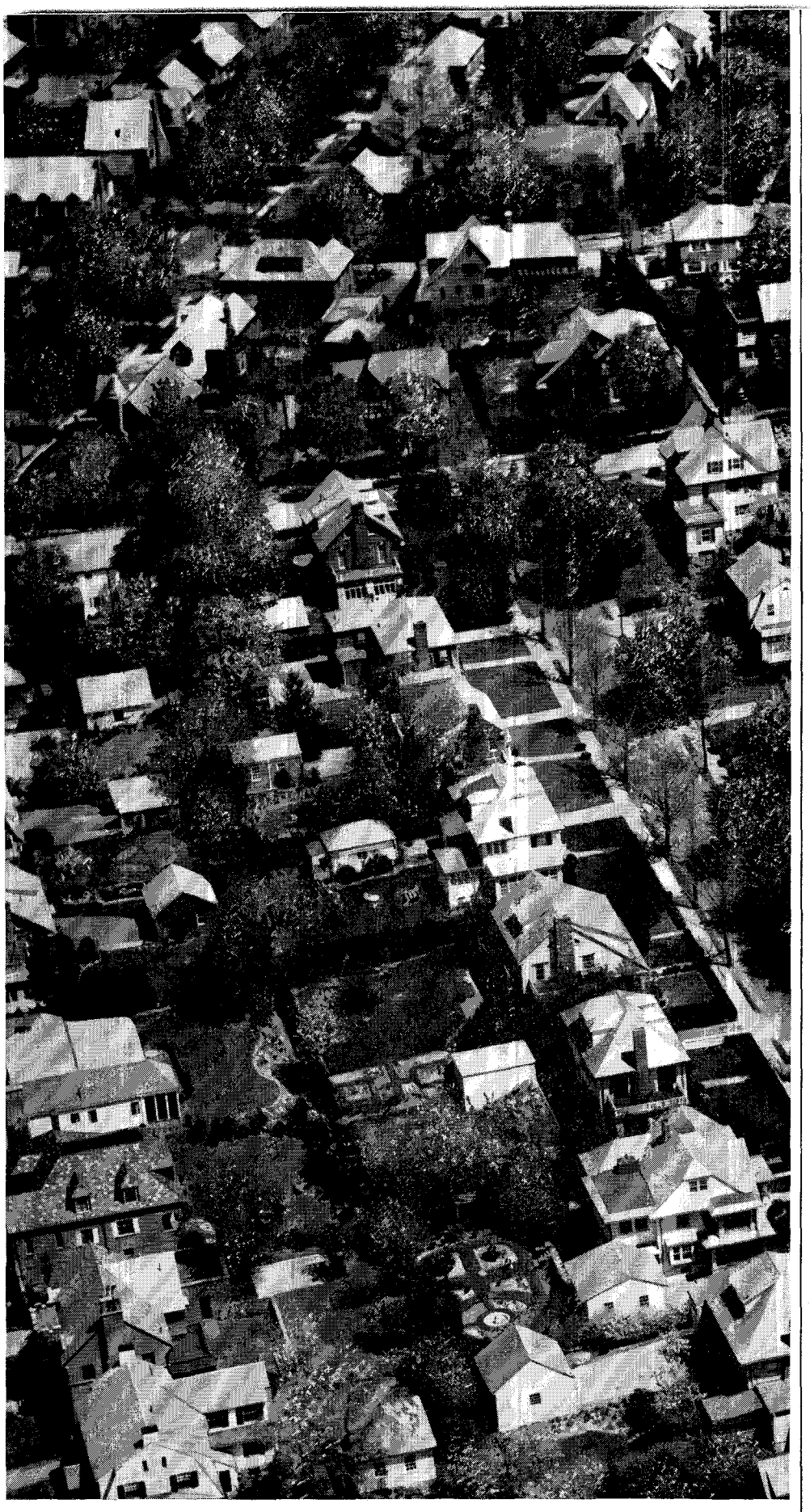

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Points West

By Joan Didion
and John Gregory Dunne

Apollo 204

There was a time when I might not have noticed the newspaper item, but today I did: The target date for the Jupiter shoot was 1972. On that frigid, distant planet 480 million miles from the sun, NASA scientists said they hoped to find some of the original material that went into its creation. There was no mention of astronauts Grissom, White and Chaffee. The moon might have been made of green cheese. The space program seemed back on its well-oiled tracks, breezy, confident, impenetrable. And yet, it would never be quite the same for any of us.

Two days before Apollo 204 burned on its launching pad at Cape Kennedy, I drove out to the North American Aviation plant in Downey, Calif., where the capsule was designed. I had been assigned to do a story on the first Apollo shot and I wanted to see the equipment. It was raining that day, the kind of torrential monsoon that afflicts Southern California those few days a year when the sky opens. Now, weeks later, I can remember everything that happened that Wednesday, what I had for lunch, the kind of beer I drank. I got annoyed at the security guard because he made me park so far from the administration building, and I somehow faulted North American for being located just down the street from the "largest Chrysler-Plymouth dealer in Southern California," a man whose insistent huckstering is drilled into the brain every hour of the television day and night. I remember thinking as I walked through the rain, irritated, soaked, a cold coming on, that I had never thought much of the astronauts anyway.

As a journalist, I am inhibited by the fact that I don't much like to ask questions. I have never been able to ask anyone how much money he makes or how long he and his wife have been sleeping in separate bedrooms. I rely upon having my ignorance chipped away by observation. But my ignorance about the space program was so vast that day that I was forced, haltingly, afraid of making a fool out of myself, to make the requisite queries. The answers are recorded in my notebook and I am not sure that I could tell you what they mean. There are references to "thrust" and "psi" and "O-g." The engineer to whom I talked was infinitely patient, with a broad, open Irish face, and I can remember thinking how our prejudices are programmed, how I had never expected to find an Irish engineer; a German surely, a Scandinavian or a Jew perhaps, but not a man named McCarthy. He talked about skiing and he talked about Mars as if they were equally plausible. Mars was the next great space adventure, he said, and then he was talking about the snow at Mammoth. It was as if the moon had already been conquered. The Mars target date was 1985, the round trip would take two years, with a 10-day layover on the planet. I brought the subject back to the moon. "You can run a Greyhound bus line up there," he said. "Let the men dig rocks while they wait to come back."

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His confidence was contagious. It is always easier to think of the project beyond the one immediately at hand. And yet there was a question I had to ask. What if something went wrong? In the back of every reporter's mind lurks the malignant knowledge that disaster is good copy. It is not something that he wishes to happen. It is simply a contingency not to be overlooked, a fact of the profession, as death is for the pathologist. Perhaps I had expected a nervous clearing of the throat or a darting of the eyes, but it was a question the engineers had of course heard many times before. There was, I was told, a 99-percent survival factor. The odds seemed attractive, and I believed in them.

Before I left, I was shown a full-size mockup of the Apollo capsule. I was allowed to crawl inside, and for some 20 minutes I was strapped horizontally into what would have been White's center seat. After a few moments I felt a tightening in my legs and a small but persistent pain at the tip of my spine. The muscles in the back of my neck started to constrict and the veins in my temple to throb. Above my head was a dizzying array of dials, switches, gauges and tape recorders. I wondered how the astronauts could function in such an uncomfortable environment and was told that at zero gravity, when the body is weightless, there is no pressure to compress the muscles. I began to absorb the trivia of flight. I added three ounces of hot water to the dehydrated crab Newburg and learned that the beef and gravy tastes better eaten dry, like jerky. I checked the food locker and the suction vacuum cleaner and the waste storage compartments. I zipped myself into the sleeping hammock anchored under the captain's couch and found myself lapsing into the jargon of space, talking about "emergency egress." I learned that the astronauts did not shave because there was no way to capture their whiskers, which in the weightless atmosphere floated around the cabin like so many tiny glass slivers. I was impatient about the moon and preferred talk of Mars.

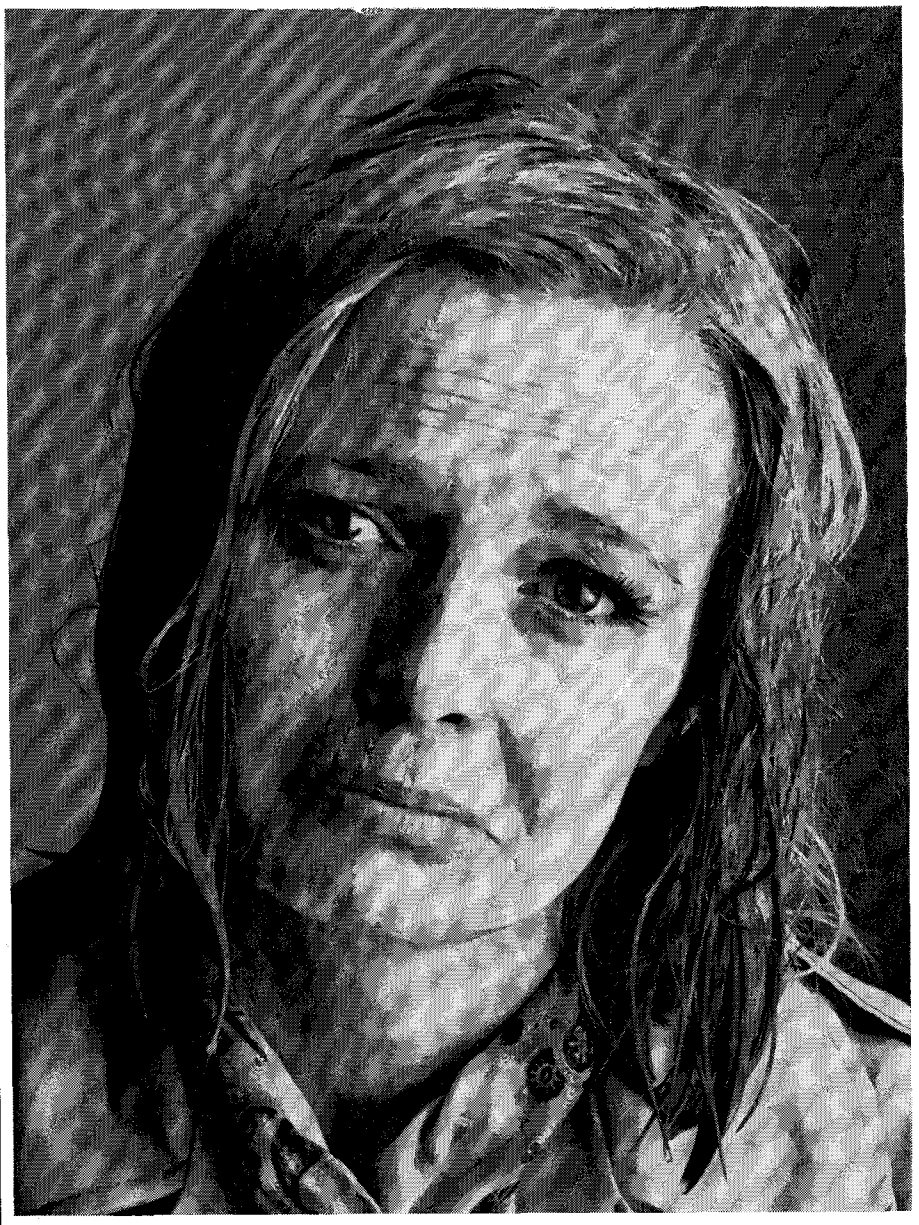
And then two days later, at 6:31:03 P.M., there was a spark, and 14 seconds later it was all over. I was on the Hollywood Freeway when I heard the news on my car radio and in that moment I remembered, with a surreal clarity, something I had been told at Downey. I had remarked that the capsule seemed small, and an engineer had replied, "There's seventy-eight cubic feet per man. The average male coffin only has twenty-eight." Egocentrically, I felt closer to the accident because *I* had sat in the center seat and *I* had convinced myself that the major problem remaining in lunar exploration was how to capture chin whiskers. Death on the launching pad, when there were so many grander possibilities for space immortality, was as if Achilles had fallen down the cellar stairs.

I did not care to admit that there was another reason why the accident so moved me. For me anyway, and I wonder how general the feeling was, the bloom had worn off the space program. We had become indifferent to the astronauts, so sure of their capabilities that all the suspense had drained out of the adventure. How many of us could name the two men who had flown the last Gemini mission? When was the last time we gathered around a television set to watch the drama of a countdown? The only spaceman I could remember was Charles Conrad, and he only because he was a class ahead of me at college.

There was something too perfect, too anesthetizing about the astronauts. We had stopped thinking of them as mortals. They seemed unreal, knights of some dull lunar Round Table. It was easy to take an insidious delight in the rumors, however untrue, that their wives did not like each other, that one was a philanderer and another drank too much, because the malicious stories invested them with a humanity they otherwise seemed to lack. With their magazine contract, their motel, their bank, their political candidacies, they had made space seem less an adventure than a parlay. They were not in the mold of Lindbergh, lonely men making solitary decisions, pitting their will against the universe. Most of their decisions were made for them. A hand in the control booth pushes a button and the rocket blasts off; a computer in Houston tells them when and where to come down.

It seemed the ultimate triumph of technology over man. The countdown, the blast-off, the predicted number of orbits, the splashdown, the ritual aboard the carrier—it had become so we were scarcely aware it was happening. What the fire aboard Apollo 204 touched was a sense of guilt that made the space program more real than it had been since the people of Perth turned on their lights. Death had proved what we had chosen to forget—that the astronauts were as vulnerable as the rest of us.

John Gregory Dunne



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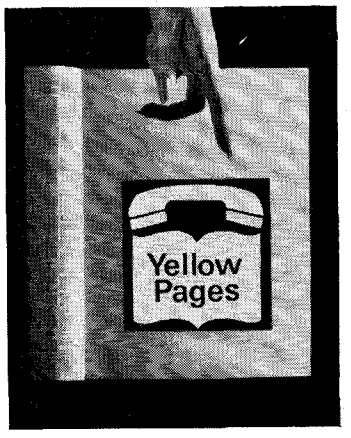

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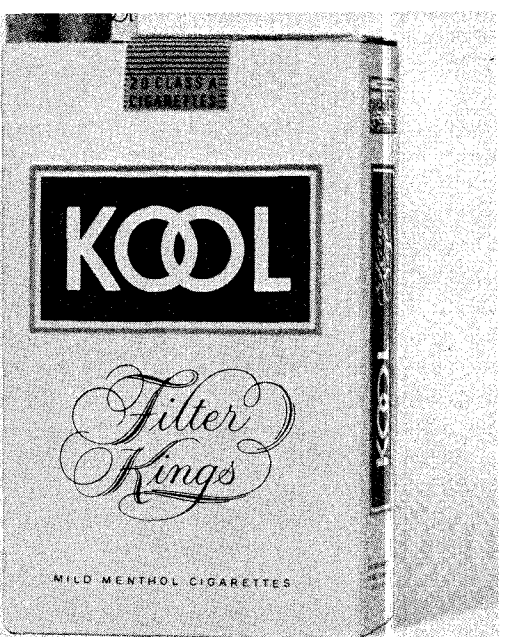

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IS THIS PLANE A BILLI DOLLA BLUND

The controvers will give us two aircraft for the one, if Robert Mc is right. But if he 'may a benign Pr save these Unite

Shortly before nine o'clo morning not long ago, two li up to the River Entrance o A group of businessmen clim proached the steps to the the door they gave their na who motioned them to an rose one flight, then turnec corridor. Moments later the top officials of the General and the Pratt & Whitney A of United Aircraft Corp. 3E912 and took their place table with a blue felt top.

Quickly other men joine these were Deputy Secretary Vance, Air Force Secretary Navy Secretary Paul H. Nit S. Foster Jr., the Direct

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"Most Navy people feel we have to go along, an

Research and Engineering. Precisely at nine o'clock Robert S. McNamara strode into the room. He was in shirtsleeves; his face was pale from long hours at his desk. He crossed the beige carpet and pulled out a blue leather chair at the head of the table.

Now McNamara and his associates began to question the businessmen on matters of surprisingly intricate detail. What, for example, had they done to reduce aerodynamic drag? Was the inlet functioning properly? Did the engine's nozzles need further improvement? How much would that cost?

As the interrogation proceeded, McNamara bent forward intently over the table. In the corners of the room, aides strained to scribble the businessmen's replies in little notebooks. At 10:30 McNamara rose from his chair. "That's all I have, gentlemen," he said. "Thank you for coming."

The subject of the meeting was a controversial fighter-bomber once called the TFX but now designated the F-111. Despite the enormous demands made upon his time by the Vietnam War and the antiballistic-missile dispute, McNamara has been presiding over such meetings on the F-111 at regular intervals since last September.

To the Secretary's critics, this fact is ominously significant. "If a program this far along—and we're already two years into flight-testing—has to be managed from the top of the Pentagon," says one, "then it must be in trouble." McNamara's supporters disagree. His participation in these Saturday-morning meetings, they say, merely underlines the depth of his commitment to the program's success.

Such a commitment is understandable. The F-111 is a revolutionary aircraft in both concept and design. It encompasses several major advances in what aeronautical engineers call "the state of the art"—advances that will have a profound effect upon all future airplane design. The most important of these is a wing that can be moved backward and forward in flight.

With its wings extended at right angles to the fuselage, the F-111 should be able to take off and land at extremely slow speeds and in extremely short distances. This should enable it to operate from short, improvised runways as well as from the decks of aircraft carriers. With its wings swept back 60 degrees, the F-111 will become a totally different bird—capable of flying at Mach 2.5 (roughly 1,650 mph) at high altitudes. With the wings tucked back even farther, almost flush with the tail, it will swoop down "on the deck" and fly supersonically at altitudes low enough to avoid enemy radar.

So versatile is the F-111, in theory at least, that it is scheduled to play a vital role in the defense of the free world for the next 10 or 15 years. The Air Force plans to use it not only as a tactical fighter (the F-111A) but also as a reconnaissance plane (the RF-111A) and as a strategic bomber (the FB-111A). The Navy will employ its model, the F-111B, as a patrol plane to protect the fleet. Models for the Australians (F-111C) and British (F-111K) are also in the program. Last month the Defense Department signed a production contract for 493 planes, including all models except the RF-111A.

If the F-111 lives up to the Pentagon's hopes, the free world will have purchased an extraordinarily flexible, extremely sophisticated weapons system at a reasonable cost. But if it does not perform according to the script, McNamara will have made a hideously expensive mistake—one which could compromise the security of the U.S. and its allies for many years to come. McNamara's commitment to the program is, therefore, equally understandable on a more personal scale, for the F-111 is a test case of this brilliant, enormously dedicated man's entire approach at the Pentagon.

Six years ago both the Air Force and the Navy were planning to build new aircraft—two entirely different planes to meet their different needs. McNamara junked their plans and forced them to develop a single plane—the F-111—as the answer to the needs of both. In support of his decision, he argued that "cost effectiveness" and "value engineering" studies showed that one plane could do the work of two, saving the taxpayers $1 billion.

The services fought his plan. In procuring any new weapons system, they argued, the emphasis should always be placed on performance—not on cost effectiveness. Although a "common" airplane might be cheaper to build, it would have to be subjected to so many compromises that its worth as a fighting plane might be questionable indeed. No pilot wants to fly a compromise into combat.

Now the decision to build the F-111 is being attacked on another count: The aircraft's costs have soared beyond anyone's expectations. In 1962 the Pentagon estimated a total research-and-development outlay of $892 million. Already, nearly $1.25 billion has been appropriated for development of the Air Force and Navy fighters alone. By the time the full R.&D. program has run its course, some observers maintain, the figure may exceed $2 billion.

Production prices have escalated as well. In 1962 the estimated "flyaway" cost of each of the 1,700 planes then planned hovered around $3 million. Although the Pentagon will not divulge its most recent figures, qualified sources put the eventual "flyaway" cost of each Air Force F-111A at $6.5 million; each Navy F-111B at $9.5 million. And the total cost of the program has jumped from an estimated $6.5 billion (for 1,700 planes) in 1962 to roughly $11 billion (for 1,300 aircraft) today.

What's more, both the basic F-111 models are beset by technical troubles.

Radical F-111 design permits wings to be swung forward for short take-offs and landings, as on Air Force model (below, left)—or swept ba

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ep our mouths shut, or there won't be any Navy.

They weigh too much; their drag (resistance caused by the friction of air against a plane's skin) is too great; one or both of their twin engines sometimes conk out in flight. As a result, both planes are far behind schedule.

In his office in a Washington suburb a noted aeronautical engineer, a man honored many times by a grateful nation, assesses the F-111's capabilities. "The airplane is too big and expensive to be used as a fighter by the Tactical Air Command," he begins. "It's also too big and expensive to be used on a carrier. On the other hand, it's simply too small to be a bomber. It will be better than anything else we have, but it just doesn't fit today's missions."

Almost to a man, the program's critics absolve the F-111's builders of basic responsibility for its troubles. Other contractors, they feel, would have experienced similar difficulties. In their view, most of the airplane's drawbacks can be traced to a single, fundamental error: McNamara's insistence that one "common" airplane could satisfy the separate requirements of the separate services.

"It was a bad decision," insists Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, former Air Force Chief of Staff. "You can't have everything in one airplane. When you try to modify an airplane too much, you arrive at a poor solution. And your costs usually are greater than designing a new airplane from the start. If you'd built two airplanes, each of them would have performed its job much better."

In 1963 Sen. John McClellan's Permanent Investigations Subcommittee conducted stormy hearings on the F-111 program. At that time the plane was still known as the TFX—for Tactical Fighter Experimental—and McClellan's inquiry was limited mainly to the curious circumstances surrounding the award of the contract to General Dynamics and its associate, the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. Ugly charges of political influence and conflicts of interest flew back and forth for nearly nine months. In the crossfire, most people lost sight of the primary issue: Was McNamara right in making the services accept a single plane to perform their separate missions?

Now McClellan is preparing a new assault. Since August of last year, the tenacious, shaggy-browed senator has had a team of investigators from the General Accounting Office poring over the F-111 program's costs. Other researchers have been dredging up facts and figures on the plane's performance. New hearings will begin soon, and this time they seem certain to grapple with that central issue.

McClellan is willing to let the Air Force proceed with its F-111A fighter. But he seems determined to force cancellation of the Navy's F-111B, the model that is having the greatest technical troubles. If Congress goes along with him, the implications would be staggering. The compromises in performance that the Air Force accepted solely to preserve the bi-service concept would have been made in vain. The billion-dollar saving that was to have been achieved through "commonality" would disappear. And the reputation of Robert McNamara—despite his considerable achievements in other areas of the Defense Department—would be dealt a severe blow.

Although the F-111 is the first production airplane to employ a movable wing, the concept has been tried before. Experimental aircraft in the early 1950's used a pivot that was bulky and uneconomical. Finally, in 1959, a team of engineers at NASA's Langley Research Center—headed by a brilliant aerodynamicist named John Stack—developed a practical mechanism to do the job. They approached the Navy with their idea. At the time, the Navy was highly pleased with its excellent fighter, the McDonnell F-4. Still, it was considering a "follow-on," or next-generation, airplane that would have a longer range and be able to carry more bombs and rockets. In addition, the Navy wanted this new plane as an interceptor that could circle for hours around the fleet and fire a sophisticated air-to-air missile.

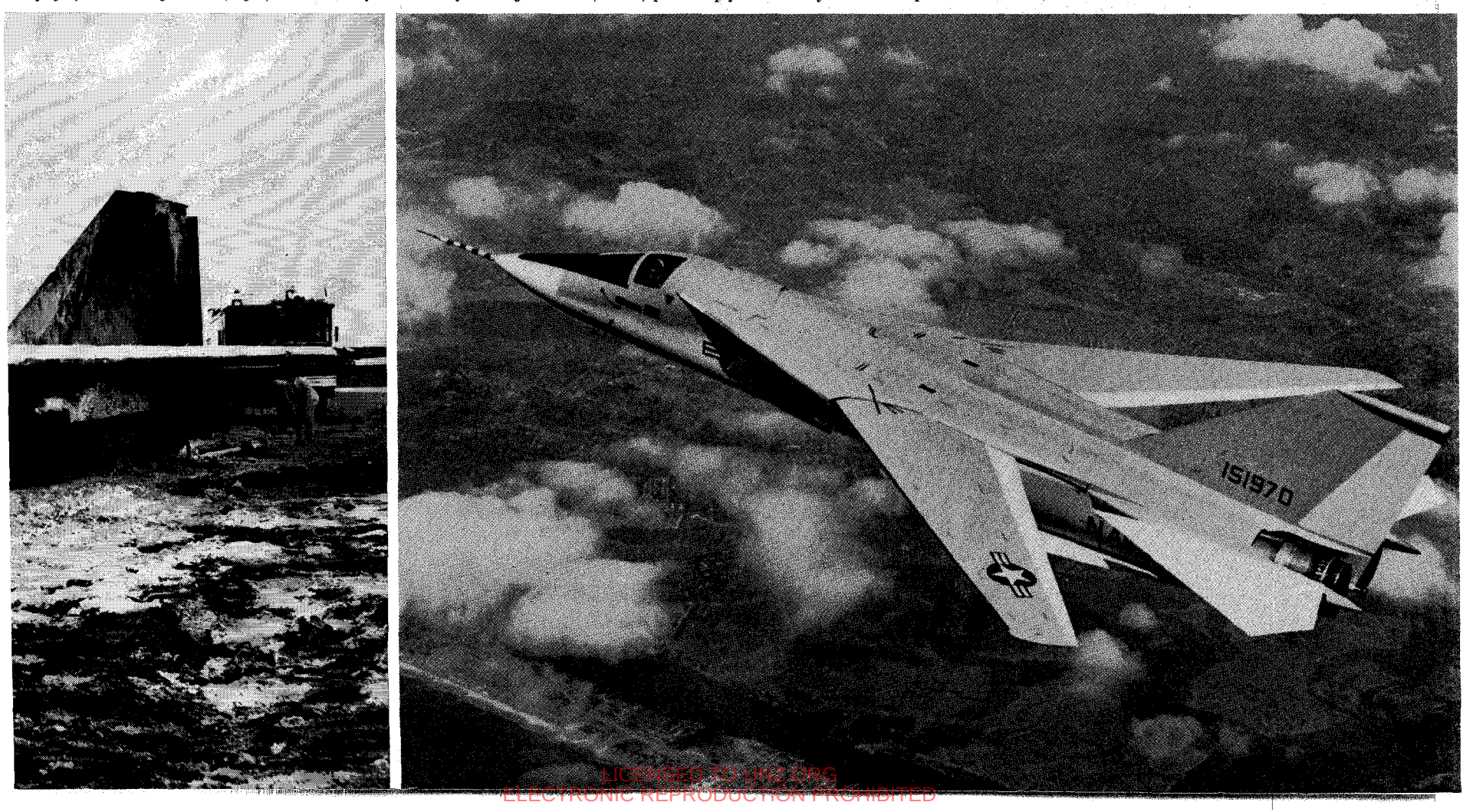
While the Navy tried to decide whether or not to proceed with a moving-wing design, the Air Force was desperately seeking a "follow-on" plane of its own. And Gen. F.F. Everest—then commander of the Tactical Air Command—knew exactly what he wanted: a long-range, high-performance fighter-bomber that would be strong enough to withstand the buffeting of supersonic flight at low levels, where the air is often turbulent. To Everest, the variable wing was clearly the answer. He drew up a set of requirements. Each plane would cost about $2.5 million. By the fall of 1960 he was ready to solicit bids from the aerospace industry.

If Everest had been allowed to proceed, the F-111 might have been operational 20 months ago. But 1960 was an election year. Thomas Gates, then Secretary of Defense, did not want to approve a program of this magnitude and thereby obligate his successor. Wait a little longer, Everest was told.

Early in 1961, Robert S. McNamara moved into Suite 3E880 at the Pentagon. As a management specialist, a man trained in the use of statistics and computers, he was appalled by the waste and duplication he found in the Defense Department.

"Each service had a tradition of developing its own equipment without regard for the equipment being developed by the other services," he recalled not long ago. "These examples of 'unique' equipment had been carried to extremes—we had four separate butcher smocks. It just seemed absurd to have unique equipment in situations where the requirements were essentially the same." *(continued on page 38)*

onic flight, as on Navy model (right). But recent fatal crash of a Navy F-111B (center) points up fact that major technical problems remain.



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AND NOW, FOR THE CONSUMER, MISS BETTY FURNESS!

By Anne Chamberlin

The U.S. housewife's new Washington lobbyist doesn't cook and seldom goes marketing herself. But the image of the smiling TV saleslady is apt to be very deceptive.

Between the lectern and the 900 upturned faces of the lady delegates of Indiana's formidable Kappa Kappa Kappa sorority, one lone gladiolus towered out of its vase like some kind of lumpy pink lamppost. The speaker of the evening, in a discreetly dazzling Dior, cut just short enough to reveal a splendid pair of legs, had just laid aside her gold granny glasses ("my security blanket") and extracted her text on "A Woman's Place Is in the World" from its bright red leather folder. She took one look at the communications obstacle, reached out an impeccably manicured hand, and snapped it crisply off in mid-stalk like a piece of raw asparagus. "That was going to drive you crazy," she assured the assembled ladies, and went on into her speech without missing a beat.

Problem observed, analyzed and dispatched. Elapsed time: two seconds. It gave a fleeting, subliminal inkling that in picking Betty Furness, actress, TV personality and lecturer to be his new Special Assistant on Consumer Affairs, President Johnson may have unleashed a new kind of *force de frappe* among the shopping carts.

The appointment of someone whose closest brush with domesticity was demonstrating appliances for TV commercials and whose approach to the kitchen is to "stay out of it as much as possible" left consumer groups gasping. But no one was more surprised than the appointee. After first assuming that the White House had rung the wrong phone number, she "hesitated maybe three or four seconds" before accepting, started furiously taking notes on the conversation—and found later that she had written "Consumer Interests" four times in a row on her note pad.

Considering what the job is supposed to cover, she could have written it more often than that. When President Kennedy first appointed a Consumer Advisory Council in 1962, it took the members a year to round up a list of all the things the Government was already doing for consumers, from inspecting their steaks to selling pamphlets on "What to Do When Your Home Freezer Stops" (5 cents). Two years later President Johnson added the Committee on Consumer Interests, a high-powered "Government branch," whose 10 regular members, from the Attorney General to the Postmaster General, head the departments and agencies most involved with consumer problems.

The idea was that businessmen and consumers would get a clearer idea of what the Government was up to in consumer matters; the Government would find out what consumers thought it ought to be up to. The President would hear about the whole thing through his Special Assistant, who, as President Johnson put it, would make the voice of the consumer sound "loud, clear, uncompromising and effective" in the highest councils of Government. But no one was quite prepared for the uproar which arose shortly after his first appointee, Mrs. Esther Peterson, took office.

Within a week she had been pelted with more than 3,000 letters complaining that there were goods in the grocery stores marked "three cents off" without specifying off what; that some packages were incompletely filled; that food was put up in complicated fractions of a pound so that it was hard to figure out the real price; that appliances were breaking down just at the end of the free-service guarantee period; that door-to-door salesmen were misrepresenting products; and that installment buyers were paying unfair interest rates.

Mrs. Peterson began to talk publicly about these complaints, and it wasn't long before the whole idea of the consumer-interest program began to make many businessmen nervous.

The Advertising Federation of America advised member firms that Mrs. Peterson was creating "unwarranted suspicion" of business. *Printers' Ink*, the advertising trade paper, said the new office was "the most pernicious threat to advertising today. . . . Does President Johnson know about it?" There were warnings that Mrs. Peterson's tampering would slow the economy "here and there until it comes to a grinding halt," and an official of the National Association of Manufacturers advocated that the consumer post be abolished.

It was during a momentary lull in hostilities that the White House telephoned Betty Furness, and Esther Peterson went gratefully back to the two jobs she had previously been holding in the Department of Labor.

Miss Furness enters the combat zone with a startling set of credentials. Now 51 and a widowed grandmother, she still has the lean lines of a model and dresses with a flair that keeps her talked about in the columns. She cheerfully admits she wouldn't know the price of eggs without asking her housekeeper, but she has kept a daily record of her personal expenses since she was 16, and a cross-indexed file of every dress she has worn for a TV program or a public appearance since 1948. After several eye-glazing years of checking over her awesomely documented accounts, the Internal Revenue Service withdrew its auditors from her tax returns.

She first got out of the kitchen when she was 14. The Depression was on, and when she came home for vacation from finishing school, her father told her she would have to "do something useful." Exactly two days of helping her mother around the family's New York apartment convinced her she would be better off as a model. "All you had to do in those days to be a Powers model was to leave your photograph with photographers, and maybe one of them would call you. For two summers I carried my photos around and earned a total of eighty dollars." She also had a chat with Mr. Powers, who liked her voice. "I was sixteen years old. I could talk. I should be in the movies."

She took a weekend off from school for an RKO screen test in New York, but when the studio offered her a contract if she would quit school, she turned them down. "That way," she points out, "they didn't find out so fast that I couldn't act."

She did go to Hollywood, however, in 1932. "I took off with no experience, no talent, no looks—and my mother." She was in 35 movies in six years, "all but two of them very bad." (She had another movie offer three years ago for the part of the coffin salesman in *The Loved One*. "When they failed to get me," she says, "they got Liberace.")

At 21 she married Johnny Green, the composer who wrote *Body and Soul* and is still writing music for the movies. There was a brief time away from movie studios when her daughter Barbara was born, but "it was always understood I would work." Divorced from Green in 1943, she married radio producer Bud Ernst in 1945 (He died in 1950). She did have a brief domestic phase, "but my heart was never in it."

Before it could get to be habit-forming, her friend Don Loper, the dancer, opened a custom dress business in Hollywood and asked her to help him sell clothes. When she protested that she had never sold anything, Mr. Loper replied, "You're an actress, aren't you? Well, play a saleslady."

At Mr. Loper's couture house she found they were doing disorganized things like taking orders and forgetting to put them through or cut the clothes or schedule fittings. "So I got big sheets of graph paper, charted what each lady had ordered and when it was supposed to be ready, and the first thing you know we were making clothes for people."

Even so, *haute couture* was no substitute for "getting back to work," so in 1948 she headed for New York, where she arrived in time for a new show-business wrinkle that *nobody* had any training for—television. "None of us knew what we were doing, and we had a ball."

Du Mont signed her for a 15-minute show called *Fashions, Coming and Becoming*, which paid her the princely sum of $50 a show for both narration and commercials. "The heat was unbearable. It went off the air in the summer because no one could stand it." But she was "fascinated by TV. It combines movie and stage experience. You have to keep talking. And the camera never frightened me."

In 1949, Westinghouse was looking for someone who could stare down a camera and say, unflinchingly: "The colder cold in the giant freeze chest of the frost-free refrigerator keeps your frozen food safely, firmly frozen." In those days before TelePrompTers, "you had to *learn* commercials. One girl they tried got so nervous she spilled chocolate sauce on the range. Another couldn't speak. Literally." Miss Furness had only one question when Westinghouse called: "Where do I show up?"

For 11½ years thereafter she went back every Monday, opening and closing refrigerators, pushing vacuum cleaners about and wearing a well paced wardrobe which became part of her trademark. "I used clothes to get people to look at me. But not to the point of not listening. I just wanted them to stay at the set."

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By the time Westinghouse took her to the political conventions in 1952, she had become a sort of American folk heroine. A front-page cartoon in the Indianapolis *News* asked: "Who's winning, Pop? Taft? Ike? or Betty Furness?"

At the conventions, "I found the best part of all was that I could run into the newsroom and ask Walter Cronkite what was happening, and he could tell me. I got anxious to get into the real world instead of the make-believe world of show business. So in 1960, I finally quit."

Since then it's been bombs away. She has covered the 1964 conventions and Luci Johnson's wedding for her own radio program, given hundreds of lectures, recruited for VISTA and won a prize for her needlework.

She has been a judge at a livestock show in Kansas City and has spoken from Adam Clayton Powell's pulpit at the Abyssinian Baptist Church. She even put on a nightclub act at what is now Arthur in New York. Called "The Controversy," it was a kind of live *Open End*. "It was a dismal failure, but lots of fun, and it was reviewed in the news section of *The New York Times*."

In the last presidential campaign she joined Mrs. Orville Freeman and Mrs. Birch Bayh for a Florida Fly-In. She has done telethons for three Democratic candidates and one Republican (New York mayor John Lindsay). "That makes me an Independent."

It also meant, as she puts it, that "the Democratic National Committee had my phone number. Who calls me gets me." Calls came to join Citizens for Johnson and Humphrey, which led to meeting the President. She met Mrs. Johnson at the 1964 convention and was invited to a Women Doers Luncheon at the White House, which led to helping out with the Head Start and VISTA programs. Then, for the Democratic National Committee, she served as hostess for a paid TV promotion called "Coffee With the First Lady." "I guess I got into the Government by osmosis," she says.

Even before she was sworn in at a White House "launching" in the East Room, with the Marine Band playing what one wit said was the *Grand Union March*, and a star-studded audience that included Cabinet officers, an acre of TV cameras and Walter Cronkite, she had done enough homework to address a breakfast meeting of 235 women from the National Farmers Union on the Truth-in-Lending bill. On her third day in the job she testified before the Senate subcommittee on consumer protection to support the Administration's stand for a stronger law governing flammable fabrics.

"I don't want to stir up trouble," she says. "That is not how I see the job. I must do what I think is right." As for housewife pickets at the supermarkets, "This is a very complicated issue and I don't yet feel qualified to discuss it. But people feel smaller all the time, and if they feel better by banding together and picketing, I'm in favor of it. I see myself less as a referee and more as a catalyst, if the complainers want to get together with the people they are complaining about."

Her career has already demonstrated that if you're willing to take a whack at everything that comes along except cooking, you can end up having breakfast with the President in his Texas kitchen the day after he has named you his chief adviser on what's cooking. As she says herself: "There are quicker ways to find out how much things cost than going to every supermarket in town."

But just to be on the safe side, she has rented her Washington apartment in a building that has a supermarket downstairs. □

Splendid profusion of well-organized detail in her New York apartment reflects occupant's personality and needlework skill.

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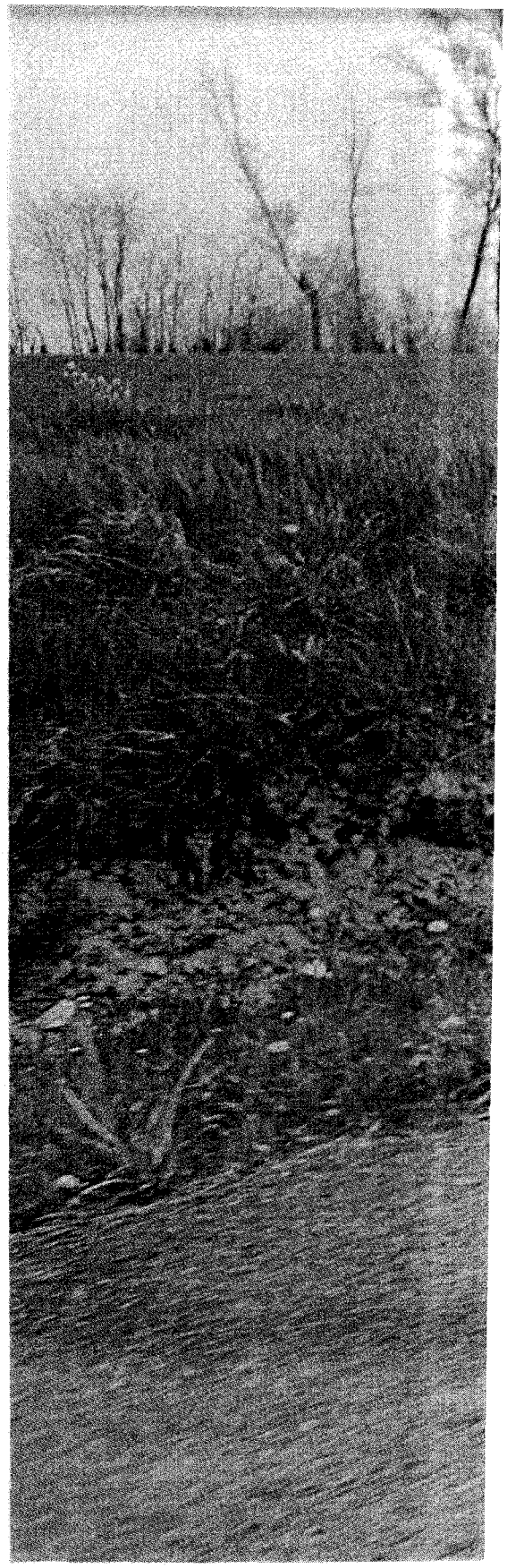
THE UNYIELDING AMISH

'WE WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE'

The Amish struggle to keep their quaint 'Dutch' ways, to lead the simple, pious life they began in Pennsylvania long ago. But now, more than ever, the world threatens them.

By JOHN BIRD



Springtime in the Amish country is a pastora of gently rolling green fields, flowering or chards, weedless gardens and large, neat farm steads. I stopped and watched a team of heav horses pull a walking plow through the rich earth a bearded farmer at the plow handles. Nearby dairy cattle chewed their cuds, sheep nibbled a the new grass, and ducks paddled in the windin creek. This is Lancaster County, Pa., the fertil heartland of the Old Order Amish, the most con servative sect of the Mennonite Plain People. Suc Amish say, "The old is best, the new is of th devil," and they have kept their life much as it wa when they started settling here 240-odd years ag

The centerpiece of the scene was a large ston

The Amish dislike being photographed, and when thes women saw the camera, they covered their faces and ra

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Seen through a rearview mirror, a young Amish couple in a "courting buggy" passes a parked car on a road near Ronks, Pa.

armhouse with woodsmoke drifting from the big itchen chimney. I knew that a knock on the door vould be answered by an Amish farmwife, brush- ng flour from her hands on her apron and adjust- ng her white prayer cap. Warm air, heated by the reat iron oven, would rush out, bearing the scent f fresh-baked bread and *schnitz* (dried apple) pie.

And then in my rearview mirror I noticed a orse trotting up the road, drawing a carriage in /hich rode an Amish boy and girl. He was wearing he customary black wide-brimmed hat and home- nade hook-and-eye suit; she wore an equally som- er dress, cape and sunbonnet. Just as they assed, I heard rock-'n'-roll music. It was coming om the carriage. The young Amish are much aken with tiny transistor radios, and the boys lay them surreptitiously, hiding them in their igh-crowned hats in case an elder happens along.

Thus do the devil and the 20th century threaten the Amish way of life. The Old Order Amish are against anything "worldly"—not merely radios and television sets but musical instruments, over-stuffed furniture and even "boughten" dolls for children. In fact, members of the faith are forbidden the use of electric power, telephones, automobiles, trucks, and tractors for field work.

In many ways the Old Order preserves the sturdy, self-reliant life of America's pioneer era. The family's working day starts well before sunrise, when the cows must be milked, and continues—with time out for hearty, homegrown meals—until sundown. ("We eat a lot, but we burn it up," says an Amishman. "We never worry about diets, yet.") Amish children are reared to take strict discipline and work for granted from the time they can grasp a hoe handle. Pride and ostentation are considered to be among the worst of human faults, with laziness and frivolity not far behind. The *regel und ordnung* (rules and order) which each Amish group adopts to govern itself sometimes even specify how women should spend their spare time, if any: "Doing good or reading God's word instead of taking care of canaries, goldfish or house flowers."

Few other groups in our melting-pot nation have managed to maintain such a closed society-within-a-society. Some Amish do leave their old faith, but virtually no outsiders enter it. The Amish do not proselytize, and marrying outside the faith is strictly taboo. Yet, because of their large families, the Old Order Amish are multiplying much faster than the general population, and to keep their people on the land they must continually establish new settlements. They now number more than

Photographs by JOHN LAUNOIS

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45,000 and have enclaves in 19 states and Canada.

Despite the population increase, however, and despite all the rules and circumscription, this peaceful, old-fashioned way of life may not last much longer. There are pressures for change that eventually may tear the closed society of the Amish open and apart. As an elderly Amish bishop told me, "Mainly we want to be left alone, to do things our own way." But he added, "That is not easy these days. We feel pressed upon."

The Amish have troubles on many fronts, especially where their traditional self-reliance brings them into conflict with the proliferating rules and regulations of government. Several years ago, for example, the Internal Revenue Service, frustrated by the refusal of Amish farmers to pay Social Security taxes—the Amish believe that such insurance implies a lack of faith in God—began seizing and selling their livestock. The conflict was settled when Congress granted the Amish exemption from both the taxes and the benefits of the program.

Other struggles have not been settled so quickly and easily. For many years they have felt "pressed upon" by the demands of school authorities that Amish children should be given a modern education. The Amish contend that, according to the Bible, children belong to the parents, not the state, and shouldn't be taught much more than the Three R's. They particularly fear the large, modern schools where the pupils are exposed to outrages like gym classes in scanty uniforms, competitive sports (which the peace-loving Amish regard as corrosive to the nonviolent spirit), television, and, worst of all, courses in "godless science." There have been compromises, but the basic school issue still remains unsettled wherever there are Amish.

In Lancaster County, I drove through Smoketown, Bird in Hand and Intercourse to the farm of an Amish bishop who agreed to talk to me about external and internal problems of the Old Order—on the condition that I wouldn't use his name because, "We don't hold with publicity." I found him sitting contemplatively, after a day's work, in a straight chair in his plain, rugless little living room. He was short and round, with pink, unwrinkled cheeks, sharp blue eyes and a great ruff of white beard. We talked first about the fine spring day. "Ya, it's pushing out green all around," he said. That I took to be a Pennsylvania Dutch expression, and one of the few I heard. For the most part the Amish, especially their leaders, use ordinary English when talking with outsiders.

The Amish problems he listed were the scarcity and high price of farmland, industry "crawling in

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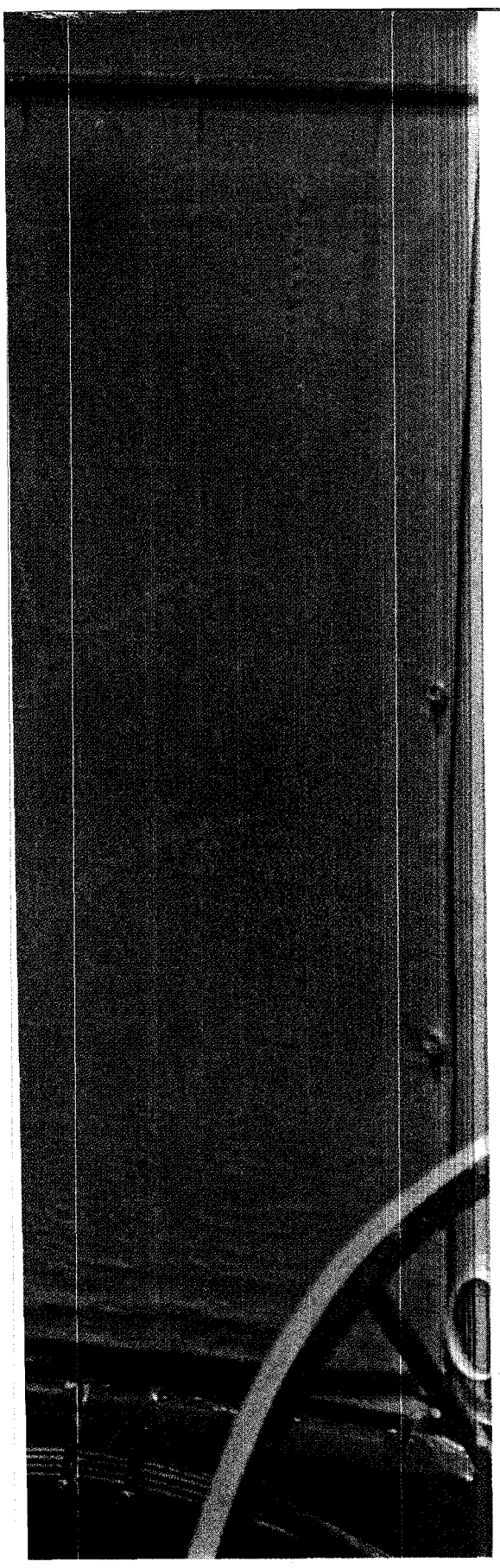

THE UNYIELDING AMISH

"The old is best," the Amish like to say. "The new is of the devil."

In an Amish kitchen, a youngster finishes his supper.

two million visitors flock into Lancaster County every year, bringing an estimated $50 million with them, and there's no question that the Plain People with their quaint costumes and customs are a main, if unwilling, attraction.

"These tourists have the same right as anyone to drive the roads," said the bishop. "But there are so many of them." Collisions between automobiles and buggies—all too often with fatal results for the buggy-riders—have become a frequent occurrence. Tourists aren't accustomed to coming over a hill and finding a slow-moving horse-drawn vehicle squarely in their path.

But this is not the only way the motor age menaces the Amish. Of all the enticements of the outer world, the Old Order considers the automobile, with its glittering fanciness, as one of the worst. "It is a great temptation for our young people," the bishop told me. "We want them to be satisfied with teams, and most of them, when they get older, do want horses."

Perhaps he is convinced of that. But the appeal of the automobile has been so great that over the years some Amish groups have splintered away from the Old Order and are known as "Automobile Amish." Today even some Old Order boys are managing to buy cars, keeping the machines hidden on parking lots or in garages in town. They can get away with this until they get married and go "on church"—that is, assume definite church responsibilities, after which any violation of the *ordnung* brings swift penalties.

Internal pressures are arising, too, from an ominous problem in Amish society which isn't discussed with reporters and isn't fully understood even by the Amish themselves. This is the increase in the number of Amish children born with congenital defects, the distressing result of generations of enforced intermarriage within the closed society.

All Amish can trace their ancestry back to a relative handful of immigrants, perhaps 200 or so. There are only a few dozen Amish family names: Stoltzfus, Yoder, Fisher, King, Beiler, Glick and Smucker, to list some samples. As in any group, there were some "bad" genes among the immigrants, recessives that are harmless unless they happen to match up on both sides of a family. As a consequence of many generations of inbreeding, more and more of these defect-causing genes are matching. The defects include two forms of dwarfism, hemophilia, an extreme, baby-killing anemia, muscular dystrophy, and a deterioration of the central nervous system, in which apparently normal people in their late teens or early 20's start developing a number of the symptoms of senility.

Vaiting for lunch after long hours in church, two young Amishmen acknowledge the presence of the photographer.

n us," tourists, the automobile and, of course, ducation—all contributing to economic pressure nd worldly temptation for Amish young people to go gay" or "cut their hair."

"All the time there is less land for our sons as he factories and housing developments come in," e said sadly, folding his big, work-knotted hands. The high wages draw our young people into the owns—not good, but we must make a living. omeday we may have to migrate to new lands."

Tourists have become a pressure on the Amish i this area because of sheer numbers. More than

n her Sunday best, a child plays in the farmyard. Soon he will be old enough to take on her share of the chores.

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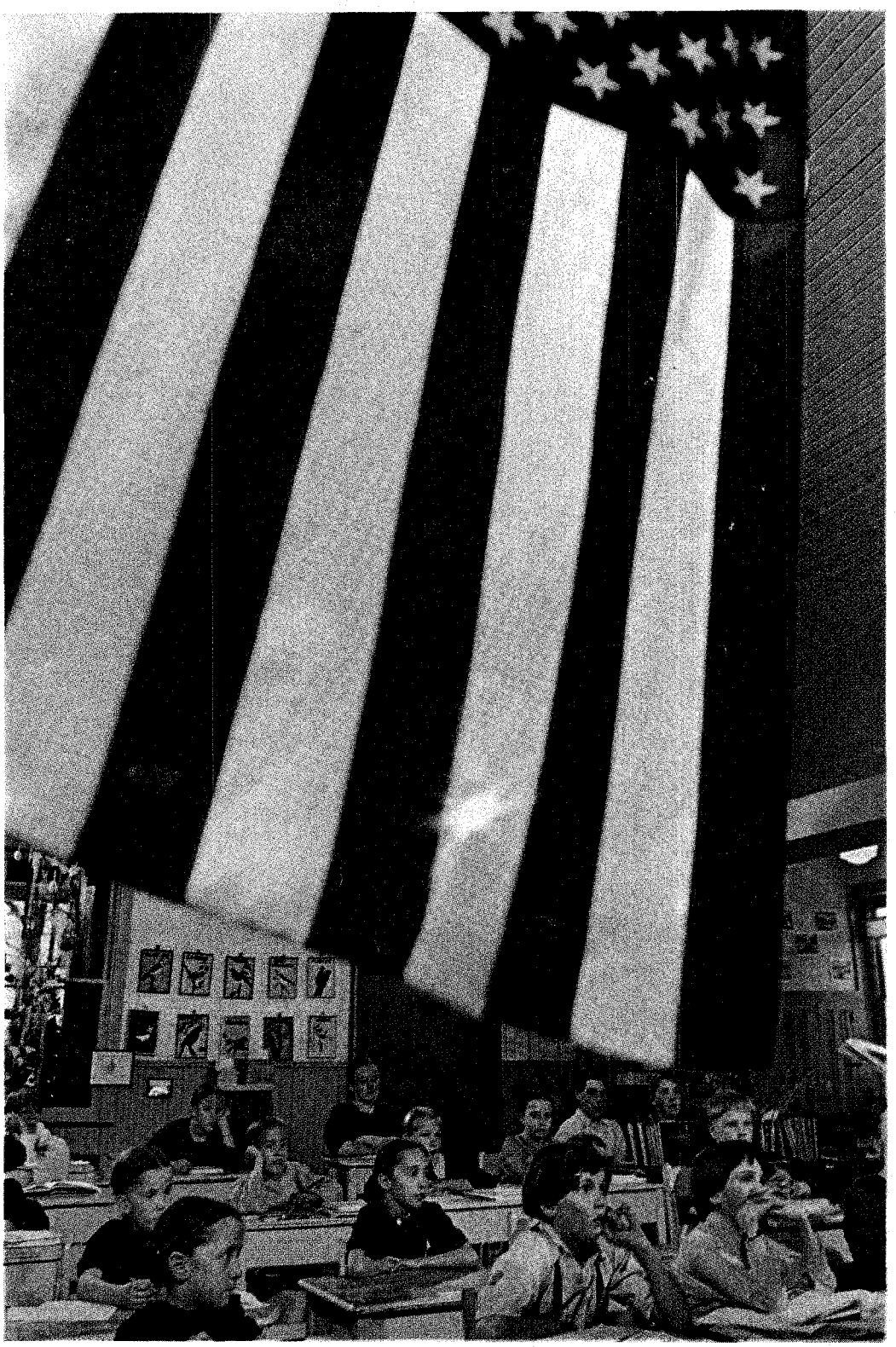
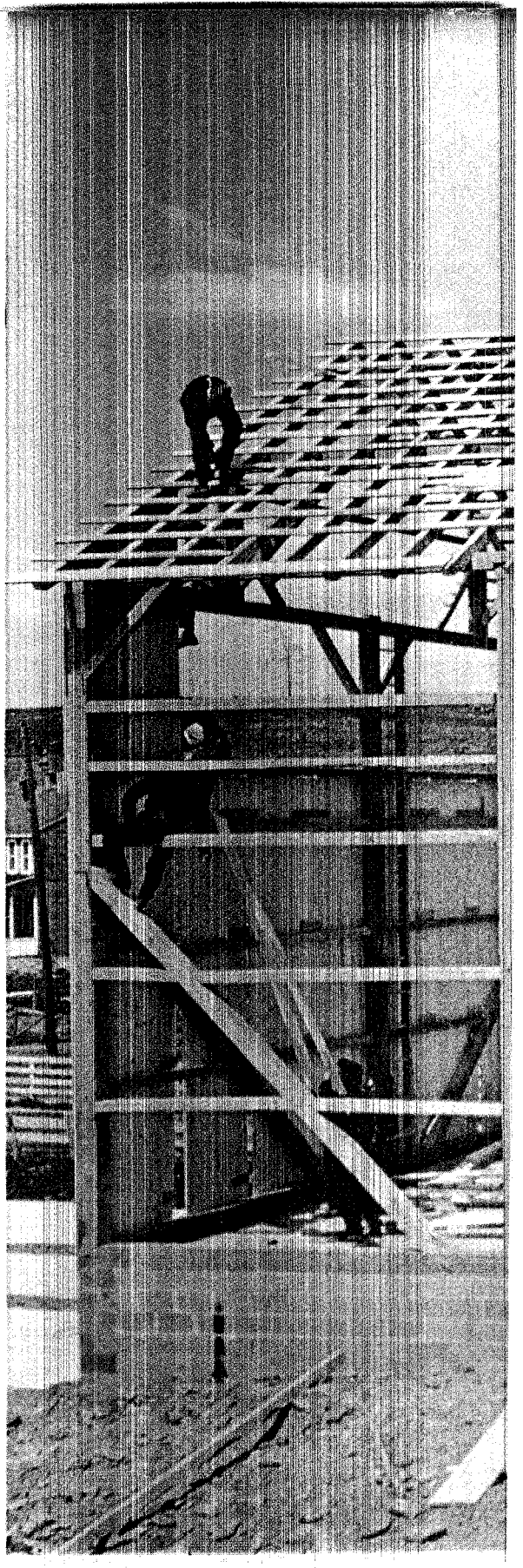
The Unyielding Amish

Some townspeople resent the Amish:
'They don't buy tractors, cars or television sets, and their boys don't have to serve in the military.'





But the Amish are not strangers to trouble, and their resolve is not easily shaken. For their tenacity was forged in the fires of persecution and tempered with the blood of martyrs.

The Amish were part of the "Brethren" movement that developed in Switzerland and Holland and nearby areas in the early 1500's. (Later the movement was to be called Mennonite for one of its crusading leaders, Menno Simons.) The Brethren objected to the Luther-led Reformation because they felt that it did not reform enough. They began following a primitive New Testament Christianity in which the believers lived their religion, were baptized only after an adult confession of faith, had no central church authority, elected their deacons, ministers and bishops from among

Eight grades share one room in Amish school at Leola, Pa. The sect insists that its children not go to high school.

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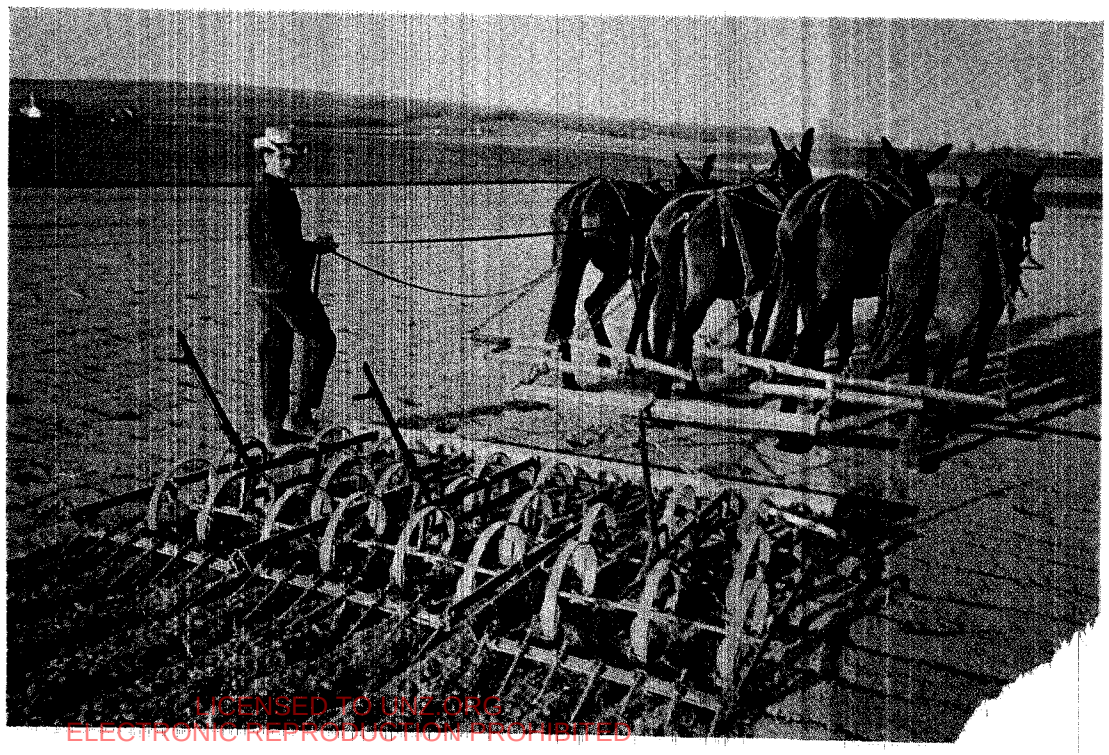
Men of the Amish community near Christiana turn out to raise a barn for Samuel Lapp. Afterward, Lapp served them a hearty meal.

heir own congregations, and were deeply com-
nitted to brotherly love, nonviolence and a plain,
imple life. The reaction of both Catholic and
Protestant governments was the same: They tried
o do away with the Brethren. Many thousands
vere hunted down, tortured, exiled, sold as galley
laves, drowned, burned alive, beheaded.

In 1693, in the midst of the long persecution,
n aggressive young Swiss Brethren bishop named
'akob Ammann began applying pressure for strict
onformity, urging plain dress, full beards for men,
nd application of *meidung*, or shunning, as punish-
nent for any members who breached the rules,
narried outside the faith, or joined another church.
Ammann's crusade split the Brethren. Some con-
regations followed him and became known as



The Amish are good farmers, but they use no tractors or ther fancy gadgets. They make do with horses and mules.

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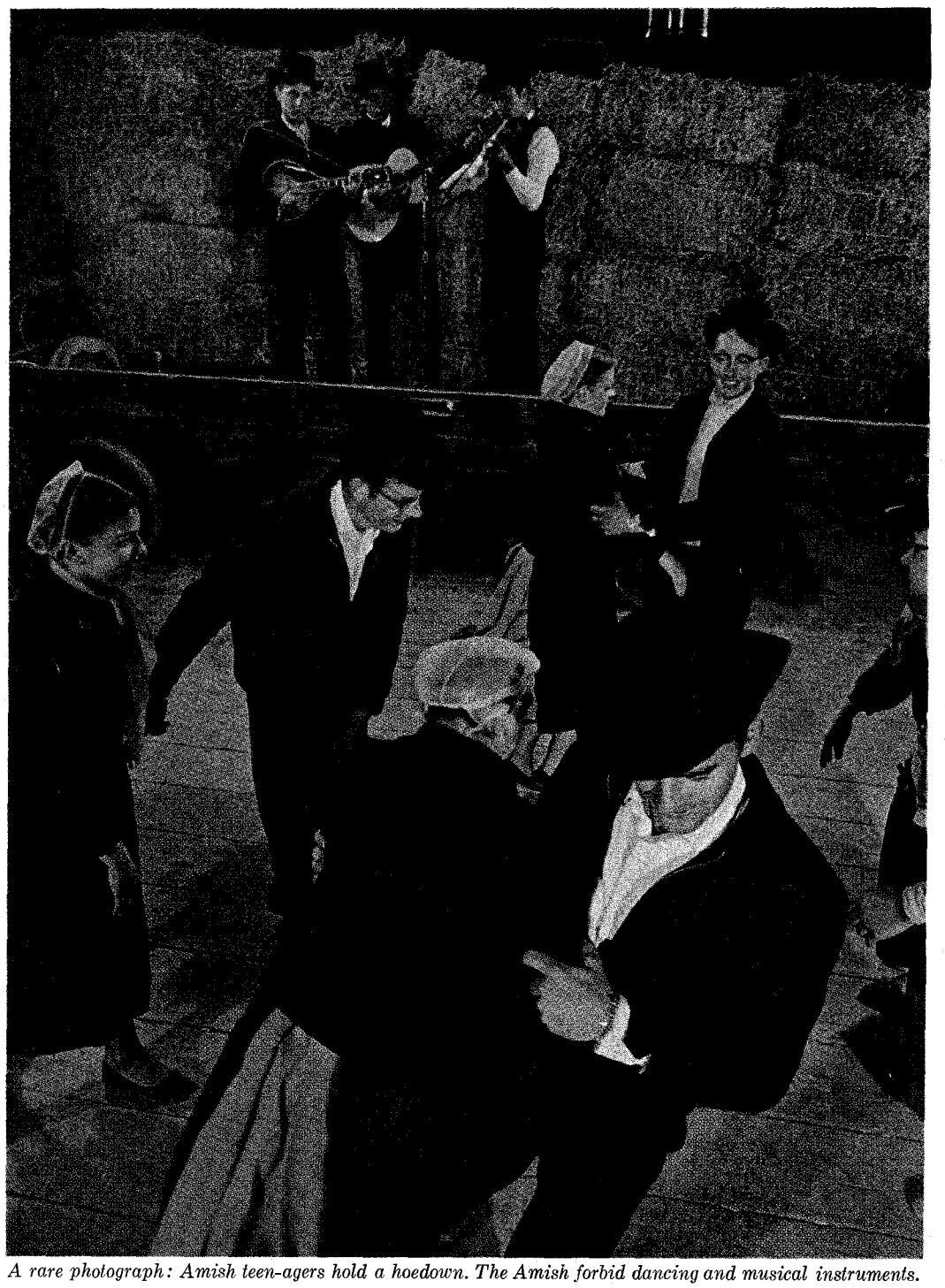
THE UNYIELDING AMISH

Some young Amish belong to a teen-age gang called the Shotguns. Its members secretly own cars, wear modern clothes and throw dancing parties.

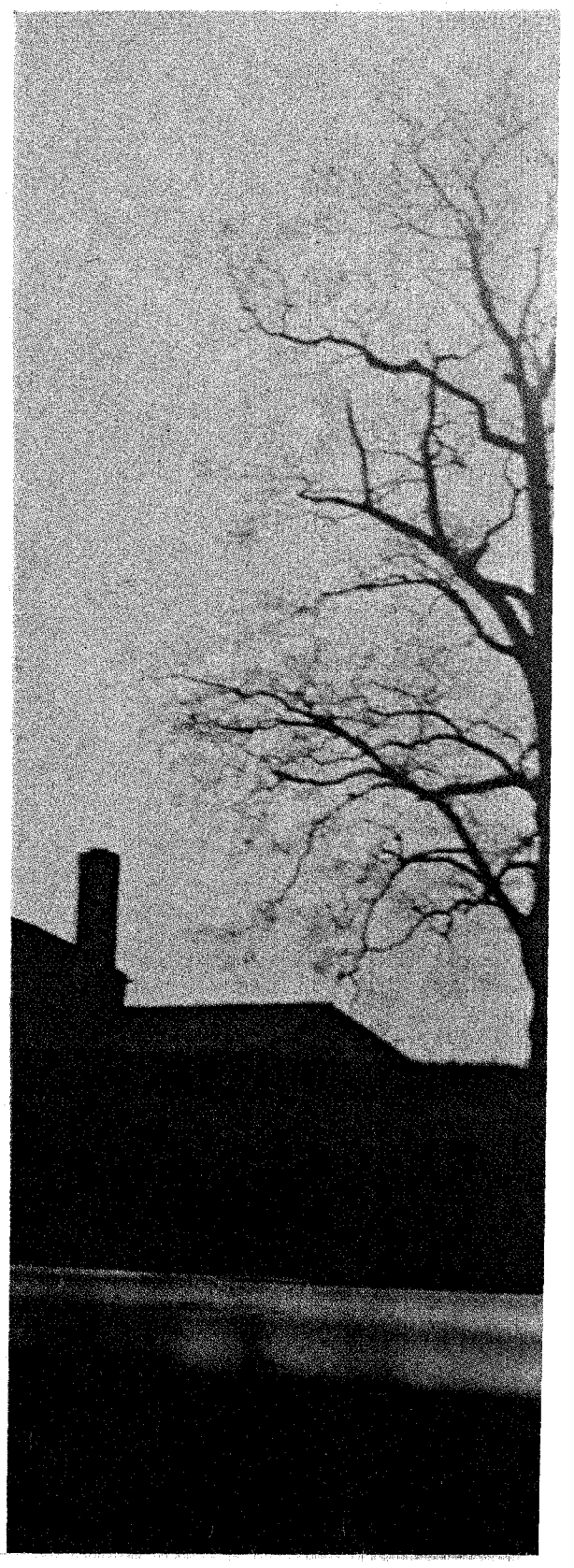
Amish. But the clans in Europe were unable to maintain their isolation and were absorbed. Only in America, where the first Amish arrived in 1727 and soon started communities in Pennsylvania, have they survived as a religious entity.

Within its narrow boundaries, Amish life isn't the drab, uneventful existence it might seem from the outside. "It's a satisfying society, close to nature, full of security, in which the individual has a sense of belonging to the group from the time he is born until he dies," says Dr. John A. Hostetler, a professor of sociology at Temple University. Born into an Amish clan in Pennsylvania, he quit when his father was expelled for being too progressive. "But there is a price for this security," adds Hostetler. "It's absolute conformity to the group, with the ministers and bishops calling the tune."

Amish custom, however, provides certain outlets for teen-age friskiness, as long as the youngsters get their regular chores done and show up in church. When an Amish boy reaches courting age, about 16, his parents provide him with his own horse and buggy for *rumspringa*—running around—



A rare photograph: Amish teen-agers hold a hoedown. The Amish forbid dancing and musical instruments.



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and the boy is free to take off in his rig, wherever he pleases, after work. The assumption is that he will call on his girl, arriving at her home after her parents are safely in bed, or he may meet her at a husking bee or apple-peeling.

Girls aren't the only diversion. It isn't generally known, but Amish teen-agers have their own neighborhood gangs, mildly resembling those in cities. Each one has its own territory, code, and practices that range from pious to rowdy.

"It's like a secret fraternity," a young Amishman who calls himself a "dropout" told me. "You join the gang that fits your personality and stay with it until you get married. There are about a dozen of them around Lancaster County. If you are a pious sort, you join the Lemons. They get together and sing hymns, play innocent games and do good works. The other gangs despise them as sissies and goodies.

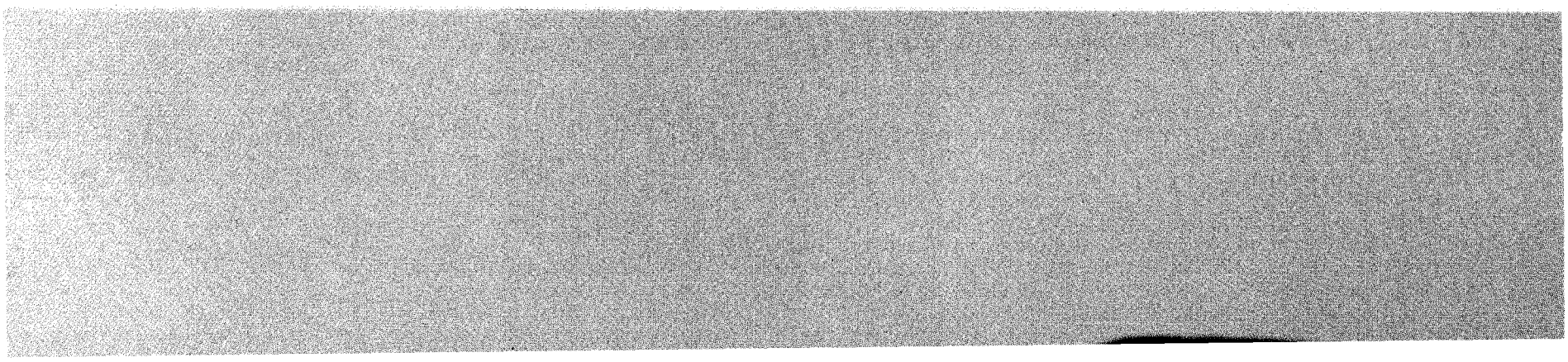
"Or, if you're not so strict, you might join the Insects," he continued. "They sometimes race their horses on a country road, drink beer or sneak into a movie. Or they stand around the streets in places like Bird in Hand and watch the tourist girls in their shorts and tight stretch pants.

"Then at the bottom of the list are the Shotguns, the hell-raisers. They hang out in certain country-town bars, own cars on the sly, change into English clothes in town, throw dances in barns. Lots of them end up ex-Amish unless they marry a girl who straightens them out."

An Amishman who has chosen a bride has to keep his choice a secret. Custom decrees that he ask a *schteckleimann*, or go-between, usually a minister, to obtain the consent of the girl's parents, notify the bishop and arrange to have the banns announced. Weddings usually are scheduled in the fall and are large, gay celebrations. After the ceremony itself there are considerable feasting and partner-swinging games, accompanied by singing, which aren't far removed from dancing.

The old customs mark the Amish as "different," but, as they themselves realize, no group can completely isolate itself from the rest of the world. In agriculture the Amish still have to compete with other farmers for markets and still have to make profits if they hope to stay on their land. They survive mainly by being excellent farmers, working hard, producing much of their own food, and avoiding many of the cash costs of modern family life. "Their standard of living has changed little from the old days," an official in a local farm-machinery company told me. "An Amish family can live on three thousand dollars a year and save money. The average American family wouldn't accept the old-fashioned life they live."

The Amish life is plainly reflected in their favorite newspaper, *The Budget*, a weekly with a circulation of 13,000 and a corps of 175 correspondents—called "scribes"—in Amish and Mennonite settlements in the United States and Canada. Advertisements in *The Budget* extoll merchandise like walking plows, harnesses, buggy axles, oil lamps and women's high-topped shoes. And the scribes, who use expressions like "It wonders me that . . ."



In their enclosed "family car" an Amish farmer and his wife come home after a day of church and visiting.

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'We eat a lot,' says an Amishman, 'but we burn it up. We never worry about diets, yet.'

or "Lots of rain made down . . ." concentrate on religion and the evils of the outside world. "We believe the end of the world is near," one scribe notes. "What will happen to all the money we have put in the bank when the world ends?" Another asks, "What of our daughters working among temptations of the world? We see them making clothes after worldly fashions and doing things they don't realize are wrong."

In recent years *The Budget* has carried reports from many states on differences between the Amish and school officials. Eleven years ago a fight boiled up in Pennsylvania when some Amish fathers refused to send their youngsters to school after the eighth grade, even though the youngsters were still under 15, the legal age for getting a work permit. The resisting fathers were fined and jailed, the question of religious persecution was raised, and the situation became politically explosive. Finally, the governor arranged a compromise which used a loophole in the state's school laws: Children can leave school as early as 14 if they go into a vocational-training program. This was interpreted as applying to regular farm work for Amish youngsters. The Amish "vocational trainees" attend a weekly three-hour class, taught by teachers selected by the Amish. In a number of districts the Amish have set up their own parochial schools, usually one-room schools, with their own teachers, who need not be accredited by the state.

"These three-hour schools are mostly a waste of time," declares Dr. Harry K. Gerlach, superintendent of schools in Lancaster County. "In the Amish parochial schools the quality of teaching is mediocre in most cases. Often the teachers aren't equipped to teach more than the Three R's. What is needed is some way of giving Amish children what they need to live in a modern world without interfering with their minority rights."

Aaron Beiler, retired farmer and chairman of the Amish Church School Committee, sees it differently. "We Amish feel obliged for the reasonable attitude in Pennsylvania. We know that when our children are brought up our way, they are satisfied with our way of life. If they go into the higher grades they will become dissatisfied."

Buchanan County in northeastern Iowa, where an Amish school fight blazed into headlines two years ago, is a flatter, harsher and less-obliging land than Pennsylvania. There are fewer Amish, and they bring in no tourist dollars.

"Frankly, there is quite a bit of anti-Amish sentiment around here," said Bill Hoover, young news editor of the *Bulletin-Journal* of Independence. "Some of the resentment is economic—the Amish don't buy tractors, cars or television sets. Then, some people resent them because they are conscientious objectors, and their boys escape military service. Mainly, though, the feeling comes from the school issue. Iowans are proud of their schools and educational standards. They believe that laws should apply to everyone too. But when our officials tried to enforce the school laws that the Amish were breaking, the national news media made it look like we were running a police state out here. We're sick of the whole thing."

The long-drawn fight revolves around just two one-room country schools right out of the days of McGuffey's Reader. The Amish had been staffing them with state-certified teachers as required by Iowa law. Then in 1961 they began using Amish teachers, noncertified, with only eighth-grade educations. School officials felt that they were being challenged. "We tried to work something out," says J. J. Jorgensen, then the school superintendent. "We suggested they train some of their own people to qualify for certificates. But the Amish would have none of that."

Assorted legal actions began. The struggle was still dragging along fitfully in January, 1965, when young Harlan Lemon took office as county attorney. He was determined to get the controversy settled. "When school opened in September we started prosecution," says Lemon. "Every evening on school days, five days a week, we summoned the Amish fathers to justice-of-the-peace court in Hazleton and fined each of them twenty dollars."

At those evening courtroom scenes the majesty of the law was represented by Mrs. Minnie Wengert, justice of the peace and a motherly soul who conducted the hearings on her glassed-in front porch. "The Amish would gather while we were filling out papers, and we all would drink coffee and visit about crops and weather," Lemon recalls. "Then we would go to the porch, get the fining done, issue summonses for the next appearance, and stand around and visit a bit more. There was no animosity." But fining had little effect, especially after secret benefactors began paying some of the fines. By mid-November a settlement was no closer, so the frustrated officials decided on new tactics. They would apply truancy laws which permit the use of force to get children to public school. But they made the mistake of telling the Amish what they intended doing. "We didn't want to frighten the youngsters," says Lemon. "So we told the fathers we would be out with a school bus to pick up the children."

Next morning when the bus set out it was followed by carloads of reporters and cameramen. No children were found at their homes. A group of them was found, however, at Amish School No. 2, and here the officials realized they had troubles. "The kids were there," says Lemon, "but so were their mothers, weeping and praying." The truant officer persuaded the children to march toward the bus, but then one of the mothers shouted, "Run!" in German, and the youngsters broke for the cornfield. "That," says Lemon, "was what everyone saw on television." When the pictures of the running children flashed around the country, protests poured in, accusing county officials of being bullies and bigots. "So the governor," says Lemon, "called for a cooling-off period—a good thing too."

Teachers still ring handbells to call pupils to classes at Amish Schools 1 and 2. But under a temporary agreement the Amish agreed to accept state-accredited teachers—as long as they don't teach science, especially anything smacking of evolution. At the moment, a private foundation is paying the teachers, but this cannot go on forever, and there is little hope that the legislature will agree to supply the money. Dan Borntreger, the Amish patriarch who has led the resistance, doesn't think anything has been settled, either. I talked with him on his farm, where he was sawing heavy oak logs, the timbers having much the same texture and color as old Dan. "In the long run we want to run our own schools our own way, with our own girls as teachers," he declared.

As difficult as the education problem is for the Amish, it is not as potentially serious as the weakening of their human stock by hereditary defects. Not that they see it as a tragedy. Says a young Amish dwarf: "I think I am exactly the way the good Lord intended for me to be. So I feel no human hands or brains can do a thing about me. . . . I am happy, have work, friends and can support myself. So what more do people want?"

The extent of congenital disorders among the Amish is becoming known because of scientific studies by medical researchers. "People like the Amish teach us a lot about birth defects," says Dr. Victor A. McKusick, chief of the Division of Medical Genetics at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. "You need a closed population with good genealogical records to study the pathway of recessive genes. When John Hostetler was writing his book on the Amish, published at Johns Hopkins, it seemed clear to me that the Old Order was such a population. About the same time, Dr. Herbert S. Bowman over in Harrisburg wanted some help in tracing the genealogy of an Amish clan in which he had discovered an exceedingly rare hemolytic anemia. Hostetler and I helped him trace it back to a single ancestor. That's how we got started on this whole thing."

Dr. Bowman, a blood specialist at Harrisburg General Hospital, came across his first case of the inherited anemia 12 years ago in an 18-month-old Amish girl on the verge of death. Blood transfusions helped a little but not enough; finally the child's spleen was removed, as is done in certain other forms of anemia. In this case the child made a speedy recovery and soon enjoyed almost normal health. As word of the successful treatment spread, more children with the same ailment were brought in from the Amish community.

The Amish have kept careful family records since their early days. These show that although the Amish seldom marry first cousins, they often marry second cousins, and over a number of generations this adds up to inbreeding. The records also show that there hasn't been much intermarriage between the various settlements in different states; in fact, marriages are often confined to neighborhoods within districts. This greatly increases the chances that recessive "bad" genes will match up on both sides of a family.

"Take six-fingered dwarfism, for example," explained Dr. McKusick. "Only about fifty cases had been described in the entire medical literature. But we have traced fifty-eight cases which occurred among the Amish since 1876. It just happened that one of the founders of the Amish settlements, a Samuel King—or it could have been his wife—carried a recessive gene for this rare disorder. Through inbreeding it spread through this closed group." Babies who inherit this gene from both parents have extra fingers and toes and disproportionately shortened extremities.

The team also discovered that another form of dwarfism among the Amish is "new"—that is, it is not an ordinary type, as had been thought previously. The defect, in which the cartilage fails to develop normally, is called cartilage-hair hypoplasia. Such dwarfs have normal-sized heads, but their arms and legs are abnormally short, and their hair is much finer than normal. Many, but not all, of the recorded cases trace back to an early immigrant family.

Also under investigation are a number of other genetic disorders, some well known, such as "Christmas disease" or hemophilia B, and others so obscure that they have not yet been described in medical literature. "The incidence of these birth defects among the Amish should not be overstated," says Dr. McKusick. "They are increasing, but still are relatively low. I don't think they alone will be the Amish's undoing. Also, a wider selection of mates, even more marriage between communities, would diminish the problem."

John Hostetler is a thoughtful sociologist who doesn't like to jump to conclusions about the future of the Amish. He points out that the gentle people of the Old Order are at least holding their own and even gaining, despite the many pressures on them. They lose some young people, such as himself, but in total numbers they gain. They resist change, but in time do change by such gradual transition that they have managed to keep their traditional family system, something many other groups in our society have failed to do. The Amish must maintain their agricultural base to survive, he believes, and they know this intuitively. "They are quite prepared to accept a submarginal standard of living to stay on the land," he says. As for their genetic difficulties, he says, "They have been slow to recognize the problem, but do recognize it, and are resigned to coping with it. This hasn't shaken them. The cure, of course, is prevention, by providing young Amish the opportunity to range outside the immediate neighborhood—beyond the horse-and-buggy range." He suspects that the Amish will do as they always have done: trust in God and take care of their problems in their own way. □

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THE F-111

(continued from page 25)

Soon after his arrival on the job, McNamara heard about the services' plans to build separate airplanes using the variable wing. To his way of thinking, these two planes would have "many common missions and require many similar operational capabilities." It was clear to him that if he could make one fundamental design serve two customers, he could save millions in development-and-production costs. With this heady prospect in mind, he told the services to coordinate their requirements.

From the beginning, McNamara's plan encountered heavy flak—particularly from the Navy. The missions for which each service would use the aircraft, the admirals insisted, were quite diverse—and diverse missions dictated different designs. The Navy wanted a plane that could fly for several hours at a considerable distance from the fleet. Ideally, such a plane would have a large wing and weigh no more than 50,000 pounds. It would have to be short to fit on carrier elevators. Also, the Navy wanted pilot and copilot to sit side by side for better communications. This meant a stubby fuselage.

The Air Force, on the other hand, needed a plane that could dash supersonically "on the deck"—a long, slim, extremely strong aircraft that would have to weigh at least 85,000 pounds—far too heavy for an aircraft carrier. To aeronautical engineers, the Navy and Air Force requirements were simply incompatible: they could not be satisfied by the same plane.

But McNamara remained adamant. He knew that—almost as a matter of principle—each service had long resisted using the other's planes. But hadn't the Air Force—at his instigation—started flying the Navy's F-4's? And hadn't their initial growls turned to purrs of satisfaction when they saw what it could do? This experience, McNamara recalls, "gave me renewed confidence that the needs of the Navy and Air Force were sufficiently similar to permit the design of a single plane for the two services." On September 1, 1961, McNamara ordered the services to proceed and gave them a set of guidelines to follow.

Reluctantly, the Navy agreed to accept a plane weighing 55,000 pounds—nearly three tons more than it had wanted originally. It also said it would take a smaller, less effective antenna for its fire-control system. For its part, the Air Force reduced the distance that the aircraft would have to fly "on the deck."

"The Air Force had to have something," General LeMay recalls, "and McNamara wasn't going to let us have anything unless we combined. In a short time, the Navy also became convinced that it was either this or nothing. We compromised back and forth. Neither service was happy with the result. Still, we felt it would give us a better plane than anything we had."

In October, 1961, the Air Force invited proposals from the nation's leading aircraft manufacturers. Six teams representing nine companies accepted the challenge and—after nearly 10 weeks of hectic activity—submitted their proposals to a 235-man evaluation team at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. After analyzing the bids, this team handed them to a selection board of senior military officers.

Only two manufacturers, the board agreed, had submitted feasible proposals. The first of these was the Boeing Co. The second was General Dynamics which had joined forces with Grumman, a veteran Navy contractor.

Although the members of the selection board agreed unanimously that Boeing's proposal was superior, neither design was considered good enough. Both firms would have to try again. They did—twice more, without quite satisfying the Pentagon either time.

Then, on September 10, 1962, both firms submitted proposals that Pentagon officials found fully acceptable. But the board decided that Boeing had operational superiority as well as lower cost, and that Boeing therefore should win the award. Gen. Walter C. Sweeney, then chief of the Tactical Air Command, endorsed that recommendation enthusiastically. So did General LeMay and Adm. George W. Anderson, the Chief of Naval Operations.

McNamara disagreed. It seemed to him that the Boeing version embodied "development risks"; the G.D./Grumman design was more "straightforward." Then, too, there was the factor of "commonality." Unless both versions of the plane had a high percentage of "common" parts, the potential cost savings presumably would disappear. By any yardstick, the G.D./Grumman design contained a greater number

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of parts "common" to both versions. And McNamara was convinced that only through commonality could he actually save that billion dollars. On Saturday, November 24, the Pentagon announced that G.D./Grumman had won the competition.

Within a week after the initial contract was let, Washington was abuzz with rumors that "politics" had picked the winner. McNamara insisted—and insists today—that politics played no part in determining the award. "I don't believe in that approach," he told this reporter, "and I have never applied it."

The McClellan Committee hearings began behind closed doors on February 26, 1963. And when a Pentagon attorney asked LeMay and Anderson to write McClellan requesting him to drop his investigation, both men declined.

"This was the greatest crisis in McNamara's career," Anderson recalled a few weeks ago. "He took the view that he must be proven right regardless of the cost. The justification for the contract given by [McNamara] was intellectually dishonest."

In a statement, McNamara told McClellan's committee: "My decision was based on the judgment that the G.D. design would result in an airplane less expensive to produce, maintain and operate, and more dependable . . . in actual combat."

Military men quickly poked holes in that argument. The Boeing plane, they insisted, was superior in almost every way. It had longer range and greater firepower; it could take off and land in shorter distances. The subcommittee's members then asked about commonality. Was it really an important factor in selecting an airplane?

"Poppycock," replied George Spangenberg, the Navy's top civilian aviation expert. "We think that Boeing gave us a better proposal at a lower price. . . . You certainly don't want to pay money to get an inferior product just because it meets some word 'commonality' better."

Well, then, what about costs? How could the Pentagon justify choosing the more expensive proposal? McClellan asked the General Accounting Office to find out what cost estimates the Secretary had used. Comptroller General Joseph Campbell's report rattled even McNamara's stanchest supporters. "We have found no independent or additional cost estimates covering the TFX program as a whole," Campbell said, "and the Secretaries have advised us that none exist. . . ."

"When it came time to examine the records," one GAO investigator explained, Secretary McNamara stated that "he had the figures in his head, indicating to us that he did not have them on paper. . . ."

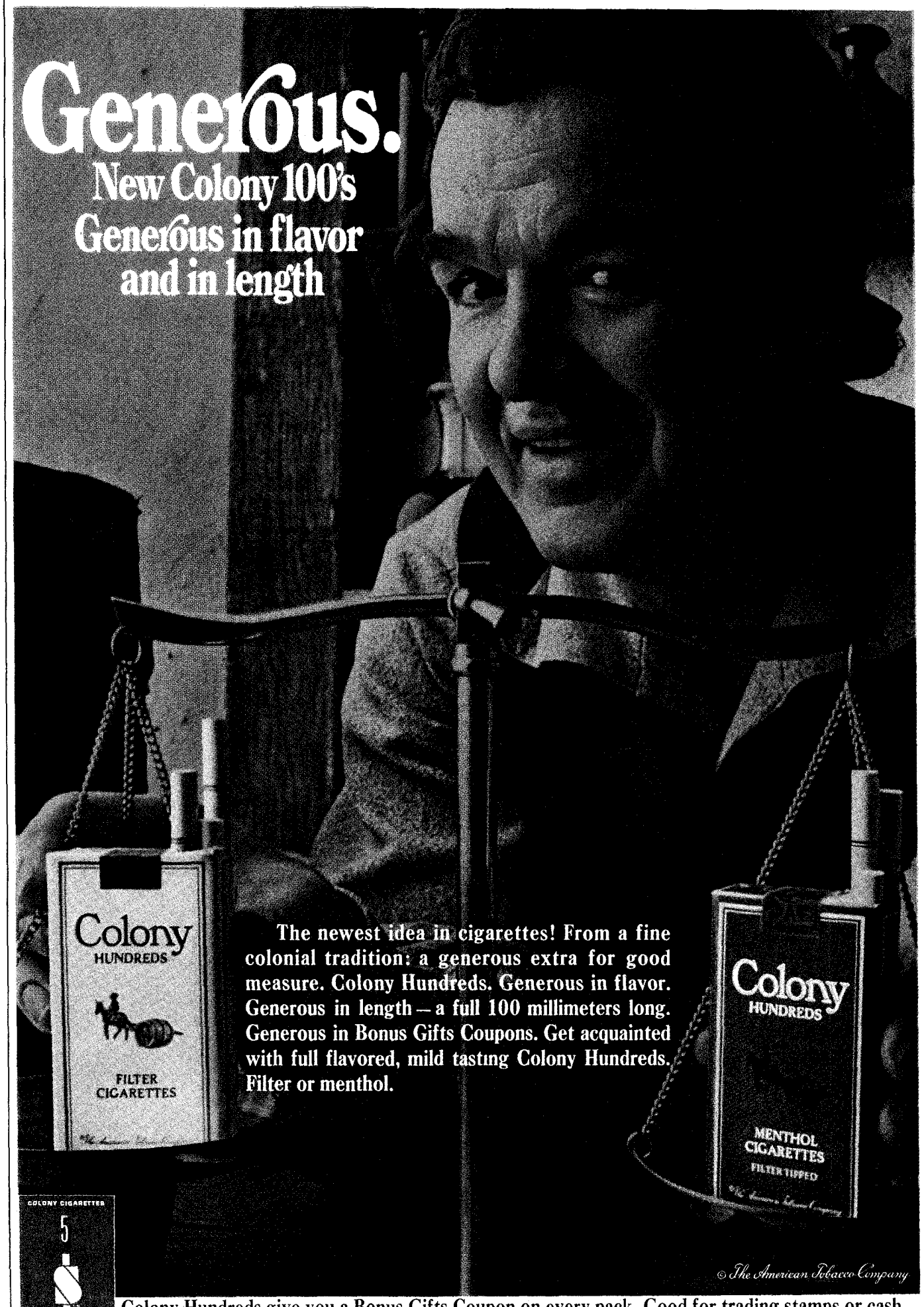
By November 20, 1963, subcommittee members had met on 46 different occasions, and had heard 80 witnesses give nearly one million words of testimony—much of it conflicting. Although they had found no evidence whatsoever of 'dirty politics,' they had raised serious doubts about McNamara's judgment. Only a few more witnesses needed to be called before they could write their report.

Then President Kennedy was shot in Dallas. In the weeks that followed, McClellan considered calling those final witnesses. But he was not sure what new information his staff could discover. More to the point, he was still uncertain how the subcommittee might vote. Judiciously, he decided to suspend the hearings indefinitely.

Meanwhile, inside the 4,000-foot-long G.D. plant in Fort Worth, engineers struggled with the F-111. "Every airplane design," says Frank W. Davis, president of G.D.'s Forth Worth division, "is a series of compromises among a number of different and conflicting requirements. When the Wright brothers designed their plane, it had just one requirement: fly. But we had to make this relatively big, high-performance plane behave like a little, slow plane. It was a little like looking for a Volkswagen with Ferrari performance, Rolls-Royce appointments and Mack Truck carrying capability."

Despite the obvious problems, the Pentagon repeatedly said that the development of the F-111 was proceeding smoothly. On March 5, 1964, Arthur Sylvester, then Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, circulated a memo about the F-111 to Pentagon information officers. "This aircraft will be described in such a manner," he wrote, "as to make it clear that the advanced fighter will meet the requirements of the Air Force's tactical air mission, the Navy's carrier-based fighter mission and the fighter mission of the Marine Corps. . . . The fact that a saving of significant amounts of money will be achieved by development of the F-111 . . . will be emphasized. . . ."

Later that same afternoon, Secretary McNamara appeared at a Pentagon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news conference. A reporter asked about the status of the Navy model, the F-111B. The Navy's weight problems, McNamara replied, "don't appear serious."

His technical experts thought otherwise. Originally the Navy had wanted an aircraft weighing no more than 50,000 pounds fully armed and fueled. At McNamara's insistence, it had compromised on 62,788 pounds, but the G.D./Grumman design seemed sure to top even that by several tons.

To the admirals, this increase was alarming. For although weight is important to both services, it is critical for the Navy. The heavier the plane, the faster its landing speed—and the more difficult it is to handle on a carrier's deck. Unless thousands of pounds could somehow be slashed from its airframe, the F-111 would not only have difficulty landing and taking off; it would also strain the lifting power of carrier elevators. Equally important, this extra weight would cut into the airplane's range, speed, maneuverability, fuel consumption and weapons-carrying capability. In the spring of 1964 the designers launched a campaign to cut, chisel and scrape away every excess ounce of metal. They named this effort "SWIP"—for Super Weight Improvement Program.

On October 15, 1964—more than two weeks ahead of schedule—G.D. unveiled the first of its F-111A's at a gala "rollout" ceremony in Fort Worth. On May 11, 1965, at Peconic River, Long Island, Grumman held its own "rollout" party. "A lot of people are going to eat their words when this thing gets up there," predicted Grumman test pilot Ralph Donnell. Sure enough, when the F-111B made its initial flight one week later, spectators marveled that it took off in less than 2,500 feet. After the 79-minute flight Donnell reported, "Two little microswitches need slight adjustment. That's the only thing that didn't operate perfectly."

Within a few weeks, however, it became apparent that a great deal more demanded adjustment. Some of the fixes were trivial. "A little clamp the size of a thimble cost us a month's delay," says Maj. Gen. John Zoeckler, the F-111's Systems Program Director. "Think of it—an eleven-cent clamp." Other troubles were more serious. The primary problem stemmed from the relationship between the airframe and its propulsion system.

Most jet engines operate with maximum efficiency only at certain speeds and altitudes. But in order to meet the F-111's requirements, the Pratt & Whitney TF-30 engine would have to perform just as efficiently at 500 feet as at 50,000 feet; just as reliably at 150 mph as at 1,650 mph.

Even after the engine passed its stringent qualification tests, no one could predict with any assurance how it would behave in the airplane itself. "We knew it would be a bitch of a problem," recalls Grumman's President Lew Evans. "The flow of air you want through that thing when you're cruising at high altitude and the flow you want when you're operating supersonically on the deck are just so damned different."

From the start of the test program pilots reported engine stalls at both subsonic and supersonic speeds. "Gosh, we had a heck of a time," recalls G.D.'s Frank Davis. "We didn't know what in the dickens was causing the stall. It required a lot of instrumentation to find out because it was happening very fast—like a big backfire."

In one of their early designs, G.D.'s engineers had placed the inlets—the scoops through which air flows into the engines—forward of the wing roots on both sides of the fuselage. Months later—partly as a weight-saving measure—they had moved these inlets back to the "armpits" under both wings. Now they found that the air which entered these scoops was severely distorted. This was causing compressor stalls. Patiently they tried to smooth the flow of incoming air.

Even as they pursued this approach, a new and equally serious problem was emerging: the F-111's drag was much greater than originally expected. At supersonic speeds this drag hinders a plane's acceleration. At subsonic speeds it cuts into range and cruising time. In order for the F-111 to perform its basic mission, it would have to carry more fuel than planned.

The Navy was also having serious problems with the Phoenix missile its F-111B would carry. As conceived by engineers at Hughes Aircraft Co., the Phoenix will be able to attain speeds of up to 4,000 mph; its range will be at least twice that of any other air-to-air missile, and its fire-control system will be able to follow 18 approaching targets, select the six most dangerous of these and then aim missiles at them.

To function properly, however, the system needed a highly sophisticated computer. "This was a problem which held things up for a long time," one Hughes spokesman explains. "The computer was late getting here, and it didn't work when it did get here."

In October, 1965, the F-111B underwent the first in a series of Naval Preliminary Evaluations (NPE's) at Grumman's test facility on Long Island. The detailed reports that flow from such evaluations, as Grumman President Evans points out, "all read like horror stories." Test pilots are supposed to be overly critical, but it is unlikely that any aircraft ever received so many harsh words as the F-111B. "This airplane," the NPE report concluded, "is unacceptable for service use."

Privately, Pentagon decision-makers were furious. Publicly, however, they radiated confidence. On December 3, McNamara revealed his intention to have a third version of the F-111 serve as an Air Force reconnaissance plane. One week later he made an announcement that emphasized his confidence in the F-111 even more pointedly.

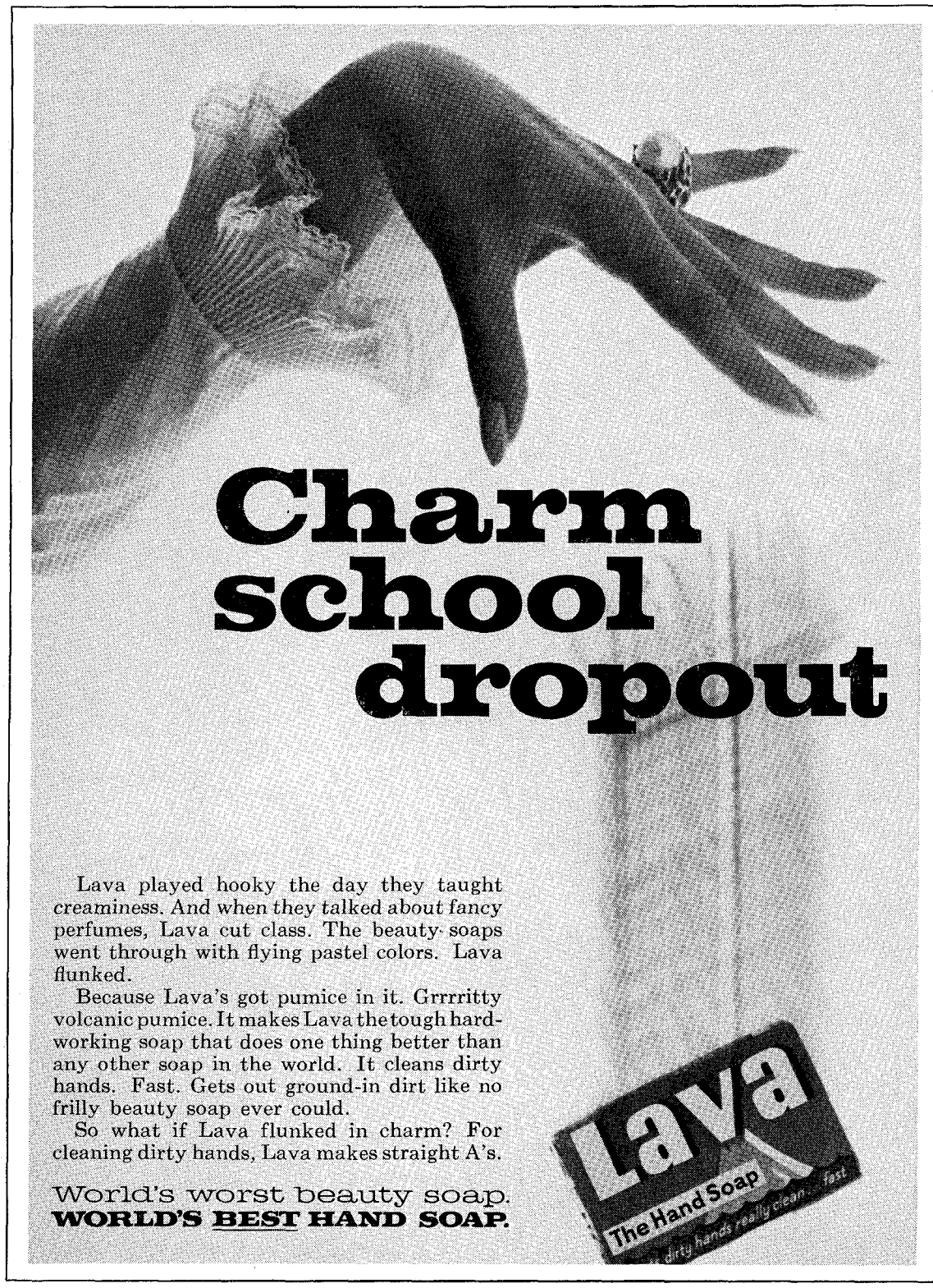
For several years Air Force generals had been casting worried glances at the Strategic Air Command's dwindling inventory. The early-model B-52's were obviously wearing out; the supersonic B-58's had not lived up to expectations. What could replace them?

On December 10, at Johnson City, Tex., McNamara provided the answer. What SAC really needed, he said in effect, was a beefed-up version of the F-111 called the FB-111. Accordingly he would phase out 34 early-model B-52's and 8 B-58's and replace them with just 210 FB-111's.

"The FB-111," he explained, "will have twice the speed of those aircraft, approximately, with approximately the same range. . . . will fly faster both at low altitude and high altitude and it will have capabilities for penetrating enemy defenses far greater than the plane it replaces. . . . will carry fifty 750-pound high-explosive bombs. . . ."

His glowing endorsement, one newspaper reported, "created confusion among Defense Department experts." And this was understandable. For although the FB-111 might be fine for nuclear strikes, McNamara was obviously implying that it could easily handle conventional missions as well. Critics quickly pointed out that, as a conventional strategic bomber, it was sadly deficient not only in the amount of ordnance it could carry but also in speed and range.

The early-model B-52's now flying over Vietnam, for example, carry 108 conventional bombs. With its wing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extended, the FB-111 can dangle six bombs from each of eight stations for a total of 48. Yet the moment the pilot sweeps those wings back past an angle of 26 degrees, he has to jettison half of his bomb load.

And even then he cannot reach supersonic speeds. "The FB-111," insists a congressional aide, "can't fly more than 400 mph with all that ordnance under its wings. The aerodynamic drag of those bombs is simply too great."

This vital drag factor also cuts into the FB-111's range. As *Air Force/Space Digest* has pointed out, "Even the early B-52's . . . will fly more than 6,000 miles fully loaded. . . . With 48 bombs under its wings and carrying only internal fuel [the FB-111] couldn't exceed 2,500 miles. . . ."

In January, 1966, a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee investigated McNamara's bomber proposal. On April 4 it released its report. "Regrettably," the report said, "the statistics used by the Secretary of Defense to illustrate the claimed superiority of the FB-111 over the B-52 . . . and B-58 aircraft . . . had the net effect of significantly misrepresenting the comparative capability of these aircraft. . . ."

The congressmen's conclusion was blunt. "This seeming obsession with commonality," they observed, "if carried to its logical extreme, would make quite reasonable President Coolidge's suggestion that 'if the military really must fly, why can't it buy one machine and take turns using it?'"

In the spring of 1966 the Marine Corps decided that it didn't want anything to do with the F-111. "We are concentrating on the F-4 and its improvement, the F-4J," Gen. Wallace M. Greene Jr. told Congress. "We do not feel that the F-111B represents an improved air-to-ground attack capability beyond that of aircraft already in the inventory. . . ."

Nor did the Navy seem overly enthusiastic about the plane's potential. "Based only on what we have gotten out of the first couple of airplanes," Rear Adm. F. H. Michaelis told a House committee in April, ". . . it is a very questionable aircraft for carrying out the Navy mission."

For nearly three years Senator McClellan had remained silent while the F-111's development problems multiplied. Last August he decided to wait no longer. "How can we possibly justify the sacrificing of weaponry and combat effectiveness," he asked in a Senate speech, "simply to achieve the dubious goal of commonality? What shall we have gained if we achieve commonality and then have no effective weapon? If the Secretary of Defense is so egotistical and vain," the senator added later, "that he must force his arbitrary decision on the services simply to save face, it is tragic for the country. . . ."

No sooner had McClellan concluded his blast than he sponsored an amendment to the military appropriations bill for fiscal year 1967 that would bar the Pentagon from spending money to buy the Navy planes. The amendment passed the Senate by voice vote. The House, however, wanted to take a closer look. On August 23, Chairman George Mahon of the House Appropriations Committee opened hearings on the status of the F-111B.

"The Navy really does want this plane," Secretary Nitze insisted. ". . . We have had bugs. We are making progress in working out the bugs. But we darn well want this plane. . . ."

"Do you foresee any possibility from the Navy's standpoint," asked Rep. Robert Sikes, "of the cancellation of this aircraft or its weapons system because . . . it has not measured up to the initial expectations?" "We would hope that contingency does not arise," Nitze replied. "We cannot be sure until we run all the tests."

Despite both contractors' remarkable efforts to shave away excess pounds, the F-111B today weighs more than 75,000 pounds fully armed and fueled. This is bad enough. What bothers the admirals even more is the fact that all military planes gain weight at an average of seven percent a year. Missions change; new devices and capabilities are added. Already the F-111B will be the heaviest new plane ever to join the fleet. It cannot "grow" much more without becoming too big to operate from a carrier.

Equally worrisome to both services is the F-111's excess drag. At subsonic and transsonic (about Mach 1) speeds, the plane is roughly 20 percent "draggier" than it should be. At supersonic speeds its drag is also much greater than expected.

Then there is still that knotty problem of matching the inlet with the propulsion system. At Pratt & Whitney, designers came up with an improved, more stall-resistant engine called the TF-30-P-3. Last November it passed its qualification tests. On January 28, it was flown for the first time in an F-111A at Fort Worth. So delighted were program officials with its performance that they telephoned McNamara the same afternoon. "It was a real bell-ringer," one G.D. spokesman recalls.

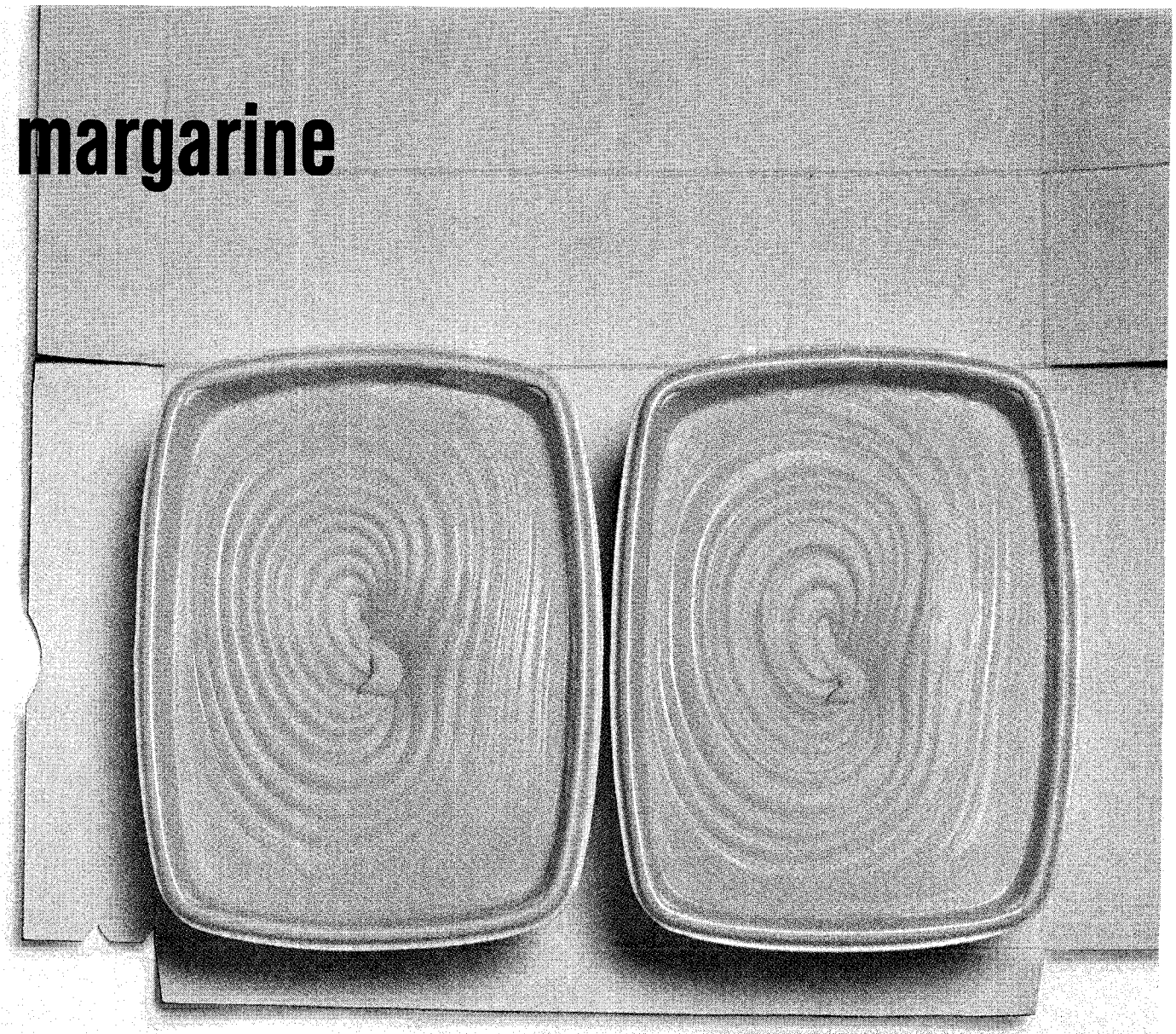
Subsequent flights, however, have not been quite so successful. Pilots are still reporting compressor stalls. "The inlet does distort," says one high Pentagon official, "and the engines don't like that type of distortion."

Other problems, special to the Navy—for example, inadequate visibility for pilots making carrier landings—have necessitated additional changes. And the net effect of these changes is to decrease commonality. The less common the various F-111 models, the less are the chances of realizing that billion-dollar saving. Yet Pentagon officials still insist that the saving is within reach. "With two completely different planes," says Navy Secretary Nitze, "we would have had two different R.&D. programs and two different production programs. I see no reason to question the billion dollars. We've had all kinds of trouble with this program, which stretches the state of the art in a number of fields. We would have had different but similar problems with two programs."

It might indeed have cost more had each service designed a plane to fulfill its needs. But then the program wouldn't have suffered those long delays. And in the end, each service would have purchased a plane with the precise performance characteristics it needed.

To be sure, both versions have dem-

The first soft margarine



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onstrated that the swing-wing principle does work. They have already proved that they can meet their speed requirements at both low and high altitudes. The two basic models have also shown a greater ordnance-carrying capability than anyone expected. Nonetheless, the program faces an uncertain future. Two recent crashes of F-111 R.&D. models have added to that uncertainty. (One crash killed Grumman Test Pilot Ralph Donnell, the man who had been so enthusiastic about the first flight of the Navy's version.)

Originally the Air Force plane was to have been delivered to operational units last January. If all goes well, it may arrive in September, although, in tests to date, the airplane has not been able to meet its crucial dash-on-the-deck requirement. The Air Force is also worried about the plane's deficiencies in range, acceleration and maneuverability. Still, it seems confident that the F-111A will perform most of its missions effectively.

For its part, the Strategic Air Command has always wanted an Advanced Manned Strategic Aircraft (AMSA)—a long-range bomber with twice the range and five times the bomb load of the FB-111. Despite McNamara's opposition, it still wants the AMSA.

"The FB-111 is by no stretch of the imagination a strategic bomber," says Gen. Curtis LeMay. In a recent interview, he declared that "we are taking an awful risk" by relying on the FB-111's. Nonetheless, he added, "by accepting these planes, we at least have something to hold the SAC force together until we get what we need. I'd even take DC-3's."

The Navy is in a similar predicament. It is distressed about the cost and weight and performance shortcomings of its F-111B. It desperately wants a new "multi-mission fighter-bomber," but it knows that this is at least five years away. And meanwhile it has a job to do. "We cannot achieve fleet air defense comparable to the F-111B/Phoenix in any other aircraft . . . without several years' delay . . . and substantially higher costs," Secretary Nitze has told Congress.

The F-111B was supposed to join the fleet in 1968. Last January Senator McClellan asked about its status. "Has the testing schedule of the Navy plane slipped about two years?"

"No, sir," McNamara replied.

A few days later McClellan asked the same question of Secretary Nitze. Was it correct to say, the senator began, "that there is a lag of about two years in the program?"

"I think that is about correct," Nitze declared.

The Navy has political troubles too. For Senator McClellan's long-awaited hearings—which may begin in a few weeks—will focus hard on the costs and performance of the F-111B. Although it's doubtful that the senator will find many admirals willing to criticize the airplane openly ("There is a fear of recriminations," one highly placed source explains. "Most Navy people feel we have to go along on this and keep our mouths shut or there won't *be* any Navy."), McClellan is sure to present a detailed case for scrapping the program. "The senator," says an aide, "is a man who hates to be proven wrong."

So is Robert S. McNamara. Not long ago this reporter had a revealing interview with McNamara in Suite 3E880 at the Pentagon. It was past five o'clock; hordes of secretaries, their high heels clickity-clacking down the dim corridors, were already homeward bound. But McNamara was still hunched over his enormous desk. He had had a tiring day; nonetheless, his manner was cheerful.

"I'm very relaxed about the F-111," he maintained. "I don't care if others criticize it, and I'm not going to worry about the controversy. A lot of progress has been made in the last year, and it's going to be a damn fine airplane."

A buzzer sounded. The Secretary picked up a white telephone, spoke briefly with Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, then swiveled around to face his desk again. I asked him whether or not the original service requirements had been relaxed in order to achieve the goal of a single airplane.

"I don't believe they were in significant respects," McNamara replied. "The Navy's toughest requirement was long endurance capability. The Air Force had a supersonic low-altitude-dash requirement. In these two most extreme requirements, I don't believe compromises were made."

The conversation turned to the F-111's technical troubles. "No aircraft meets its guaranteed performance at this stage of development," said McNamara. "The plane is still a long way from reaching its maximum performance capability. What people should understand is that the word 'development' . . . means 'getting better' and, in this sense, development continues beyond the start of production."

I asked if the Secretary's experience with the F-111 over the past few years had strengthened his belief that one plane *can* perform the missions of two services without a significant sacrifice in performance. "There's no question about it," the Secretary replied. "I definitely think that in many situations one plane can satisfactorily perform the missions for two services. Just as I think one rifle can."

And this, of course, is the nub of the issue. "Commonality" certainly saves money when it's applied to rifles, belt buckles, even to butcher smocks. But can this principle be applied equally effectively to sophisticated weapons systems like the F-111? Secretary McNamara insists that it can. His critics disagree vehemently.

The argument rages unabated. A final judgment, it seems fair to say, should be reserved until the F-111 actually gets into action; and until the last accountant tots up his last row of figures. Still, a great deal depends upon the outcome of that argument. Eighteen months ago, when he was first informed that McNamara was planning to shut down 149 SAC bases and substitute the FB-111 for the B-52's, Georgia's venerable Richard B. Russell, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, made a comment that sums up the worries about the F-111 held by many senators, congressmen and top military officers. "If [McNamara] is right," the senator declared, "we will save a few dollars. If he is in error, may a benign Providence save these United States." □

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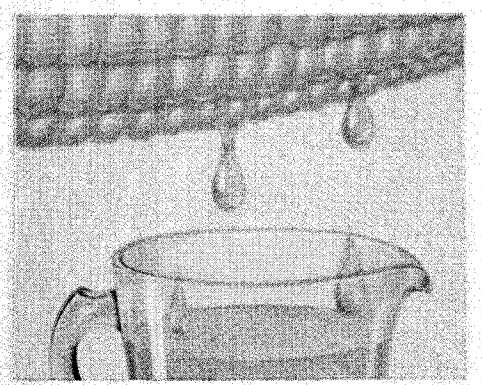

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By Patricia Highsmith

On a remote Pacific island,
the professor finally discovered
the gigantic creatures he had been
hunting. Now they began
to hunt him.

THE SNAILS

For Avery Clavering, a professor of zoology at a California university, it began with a footnote in a rather obscure book about mollusks. "The existence of giant snails on the uninhabited island of Kuwa, near the Matusas group, has been reported by native Matusans," read the lines that fascinated Clavering. "These snails, according to the natives, have a shell diameter of twenty feet, and are man-eaters. Professor William J. Stead, long a resident of the Matusas, visited Kuwa in 1949 and found no trace of snails at all; nevertheless, the legend persists."

At forty-eight, Professor Clavering had in no way achieved the recognition for which he longed, and he was well aware that the discovery of a new species—some animal, bird, reptile, even mollusk, to which he could give his name—would win him immortality in his field. *Something-or-other claveringi* . . . the sound of it lingered in his head. And his sabbatical leave, fortuitously, was almost due.

Having refreshed his memory of the location of the Matusas—three small islands, not far from Hawaii—Clavering addressed a request for further information to Professor Stead. He received the following reply, written on an abominable typewriter, the words so pale he could hardly make them out.

Dear Professor Clavering:

I have indeed heard of the giant snails of Kuwa, but before you make the long trip here, I must tell you what the natives have told me. About twenty years ago, they say, a group sailed to Kuwa, determined to exterminate these supposedly man-eating snails, which the natives imagined might swim from Kuwa to the Matusas. The entire community of snails was killed off, I am told, except for one old fellow who got away. This, of course, is typical of native stories—there is always "one that got away." It seems to me quite likely that the snails were no more than three feet in shell-diameter, and that they were not [here a few words were completely illegible, due both to the pale ribbon and a squashed insect] gather you have read of my 1949 effort to find the "giant" snails. It may interest you to know that I have since made several more trips to Kuwa; it was in order to continue my search for the snails, in fact, that I retired to the Matusas. But I now believe the snails to be mere folklore, figments of the natives' imagination. Were I in your place, I would not waste time or money on an expedition.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM J. STEAD

The note of sourness in Professor Stead's letter—due, perhaps, simply to Stead's bad luck—did not deter Professor Clavering, who had both time and money to spare. By mail, he made arrangements for the hiring, in Hawaii, of a thirty-foot sailboat with an auxiliary motor. He would leave his wife and daughter in Hawaii, he decided, go on alone to the Matusas and to Kuwa, then return to his family for a more

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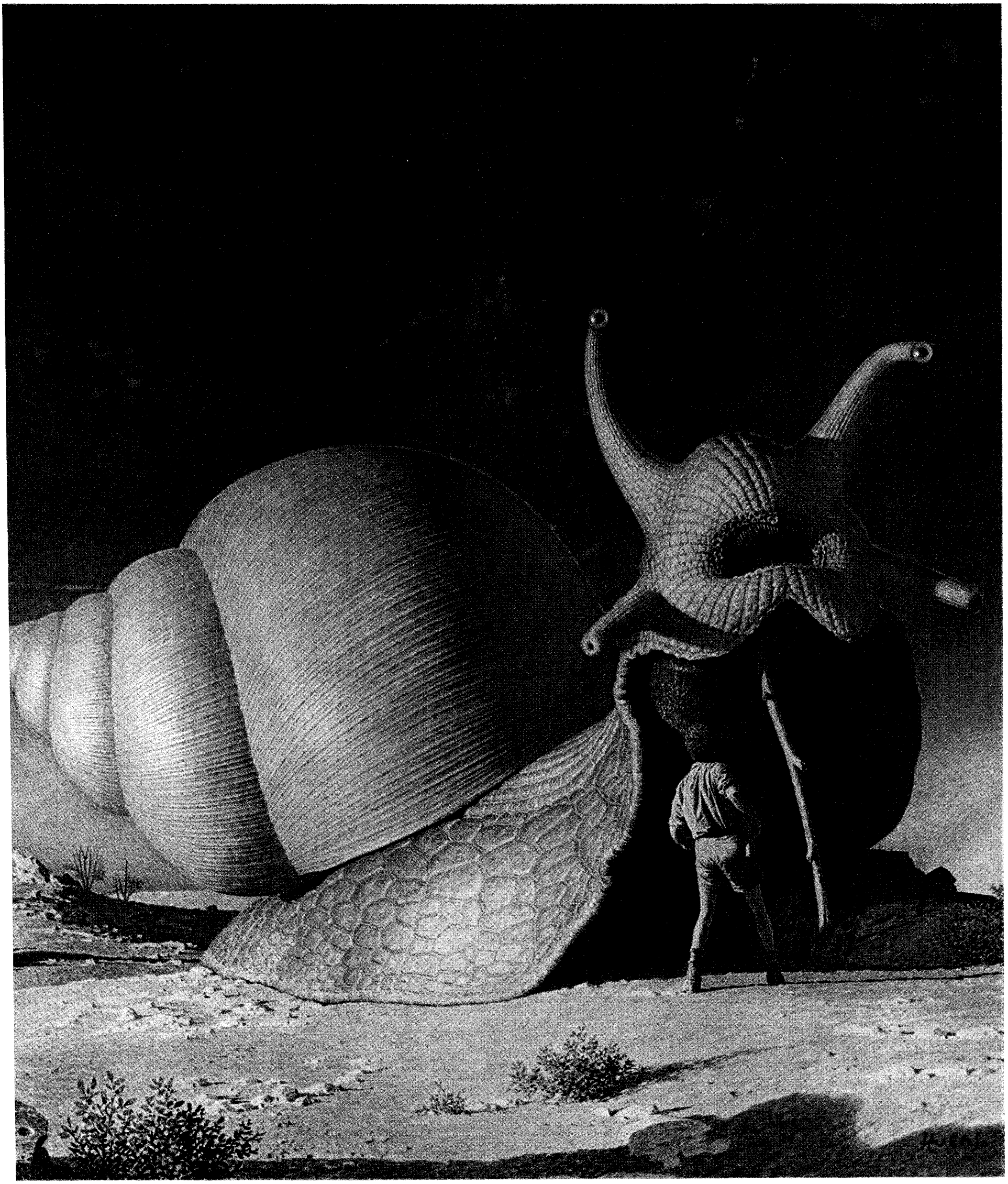

Illustrated by Jean L. Huens

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Here is America's first forgettable tire. The Sears Steel Radial Tire. Put it on and forget it for 40,000 miles.

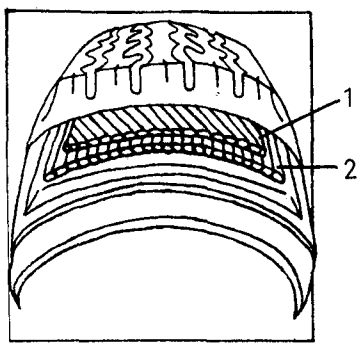
Brace yourself.

This tire is hard to believe.

It's called The Steel Radial Tire.

It has two belts of steel under the tread for extra strength.

It is as close to blow-out proof as any tire that ever held air.



Two Steel Belts under the tread.

It has more steering control than ordinary tires.

It has more traction, safer cornering, better braking.

When the ordinary tires that come on most new cars are worn bald, The Sears Steel Radial Tire is just getting second wind. It'll probably have more tread life left than the ordinary tires did when they were brand spanking new.

And when the ordinary tires are good only as dock bumpers, the Sears Steel Radial Tire is more cut-resistant, rupture-resistant and blow-out-resistant than those regular tires were the day they rolled out of the show-room floor.

Sears, Roebuck and Co. guarantees it for 40,000 miles.

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In The Steel Radial Tire, cords run straight down the sidewalls and across the tread.

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So the tire keeps its tread flat on the road.

A longer footprint on the road than ordinary tires.

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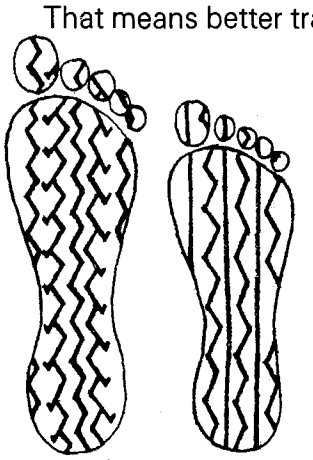
That means better traction.


Longer tire footprint on the road.

Better traction means greater steering control, safer cornering, and better braking.

The Steel Radial Tire doesn't waste rubber wiggling around on the road. There's less rolling resistance. Which means you get more available horsepower.

That could add up to as much as 10 per cent more gas mileage.

It's hard to believe but there's still more.

The Steel Radial Tire has up to 39 per cent more resistance to sliding out on wet curves. That makes it the ultimate rain tire.

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In 1967 you will hear a lot about something called the new "extra-wide" tire.

This is sort of a first step away from the ordinary tire, toward The Sears Steel Radial Tire.

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Sears set out to find the best, safest, toughest tire made anywhere in the world. It just happened to be made in France.

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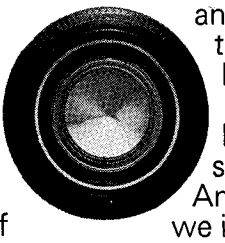
What's more, the tire has a 40,000 mile guarantee and you don't have to be a Philadelphia lawyer to understand it.



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Guaranteed against tread wear-out and all failure from road hazards for 40,000 miles. If tread wears off or if tire fails before 40,000 miles, we will, at our option, repair it free or, in exchange for your tire, replace it or give you a refund, in either case charging only for the mileage received (charge will be pro-rata share of then current regular selling price plus Federal Excise Tax).

Guaranteed against all failure from defects for the life of the original tread. If tire fails, we will, at our option, repair it free, or in exchange for your tire, replace it or give you a refund, in either case charging only for tread worn (charge will be pro-rata share of then current regular selling price plus Federal Excise Tax).

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You get more tire at Sears.

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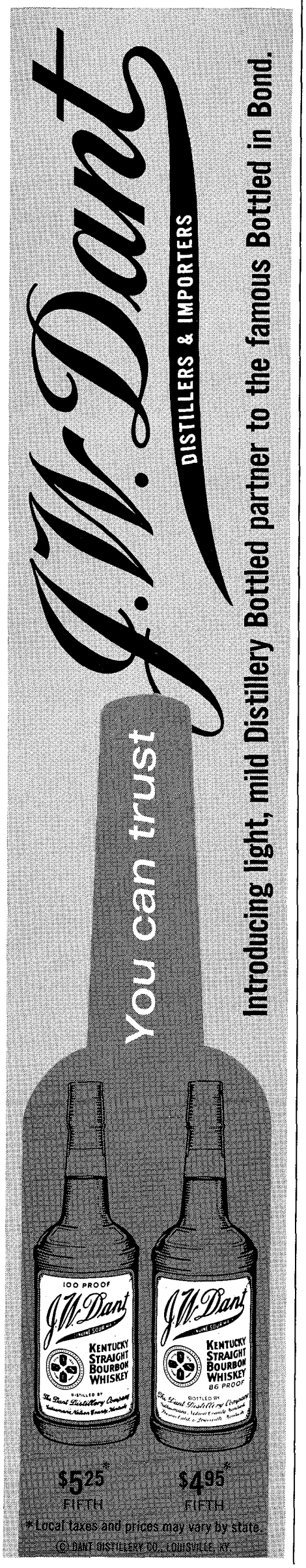
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THE SNAILS—

America, America

orthodox holiday. He would be away from them no more than a month, probably; that should be long enough to search for the giant snails. *Something-or-other claveringi* . . . Yes, it was a worthwhile project. Because of Kuwa's isolation, the snails, whatever their size, were bound to be different from any known snails—if, of course, they existed at all. As Professor Clavering's excitement mounted, so did his hopes; he began to dream of the notes he might make, of the photographs he might take.

It was late June when, equipped with water tanks, tinned beef and milk, biscuits, camera, knife, hatchet, and a rifle he scarcely knew how to use, Professor Clavering set forth in the *Samantha* from one of the Matusas islands for Kuwa, some twenty-five miles away. Professor Stead, who had been his host for several days, saw him off from the dock.

Professor Stead admitted to being seventy-five, but he looked even older—a result, Clavering suspected, of the ravages of drink coupled with Stead's now apparently aimless life. It was more than two years, he knew, since the old man had abandoned his quest for the giant snails.

"I've given the last third of my life, you might say, to looking for those snails," Stead said as Clavering climbed down into the *Samantha*. He sounded quite bitter, but when he added, "Well, that's man's fate, I suppose—the pursuit of the nonexistent. Good luck to you, Professor Clavering," there was only a faint wistfulness in his voice, and he waved his old straw hat cheerfully as the *Samantha* chugged away from the dock.

The wind was favorable, and Professor Clavering soon cut the motor and hoisted sail. He was an inexperienced sailor, but he paid close attention to his compass, and the wind held; in only a few hours Kuwa came into view—a tan hump on a sea of blue. Clavering saw no green until he was quite close, and then it was only the tops of some low trees. Already searching for anything that resembled a giant snail, he swore at himself for having forgotten to bring binoculars, but the island was only about three miles long and a mile wide—it could be thoroughly explored. He dropped anchor in a small bay, in water so clear he could see the sand beneath it, and stood for a moment on the *Samantha*'s deck, gazing toward the island.

No life was apparent except for a few birds circling above the trees—bright-crested birds whose cries were like nothing Clavering had ever heard before. There was no low-lying vegetation whatsoever, none of the grass and reeds that would have been natural to an island such as this—a fact auguring well for the presence of snails, which might have devoured everything green within their reach.

It was now almost two o'clock, and Clavering, who had breakfasted at six, brewed coffee on his alcohol burner and ate part of a papaya and two boiled eggs. Then, hunting knife and hatchet tucked in the belt of his khaki shorts, camera held high, he lowered himself from the *Samantha* into the neck-deep water, and made his way to shore. He emerged panting (he was twenty pounds overweight), but soon recovered his breath; drying off in the warm sunlight, he looked happily about him. There was nothing—either moving or stationary—that in any way resembled the roundness of a snail's shell. But snails were more or less nocturnal, he reminded himself as he walked inland; they might now be sleeping in some cave or crevice from which they would emerge at nightfall.

He had decided to cross the island, then circle it by following the coastline, but he had gone no more than a quarter of a mile before he was halted by the sight of three bent saplings with their top leaves chewed off. His heart leaped. The bases of the young trees were four inches in diameter; it would have taken a weight of at least one hundred pounds to bend them down. He studied the trees and the ground about them for a trace of the glaze left by snails, but found none. Rain could have washed it away, he thought, and strode on to the far side of the island.

Here he came upon a huge gully—mostly dry, almost a hundred yards long, and about thirty feet deep—extending from a wide notch the sea had eaten into the shore. The sandy land about the gully was moist, and there was a little vegetation, mostly patchy grass. But there were also a few small trees, and their lower branches, Clavering saw with delight, had all been stripped of their leaves. Stooping, he scanned the gully.

He saw, just below the edge on his side, a sweeping, pink-tan curve of something neither rock nor sand, something so large that for an instant he was unable to believe that he had found what he was looking for. If it *was* a snail, it was monstrous! Gasping, Clavering took an involuntary step backward, scattering pebbles upon the pink-tan surface below.

Then he ran, rounding the inland end of the gully to reach the other side, from which he would have a better view.

It was indeed a snail, and its shell was at least fifteen feet high. To Professor Clavering, who was looking at its left side, the side without the spiral, it resembled a peach-colored sail filled with wind. The great thing stirred, nacreous silvery patches gleaming and twinkling in the sunlight, and Clavering realized that it had been aroused by the little rain of pebbles. He stood rooted to the spot, thrilled as much by the phrase *Something-or-other claveringi* flashing in his brain as by the fact that he was looking upon something no man—no scientist, at least—had ever looked upon before. The length of the snail's body, he reckoned, would be twice the diameter of its shell—thirty or more feet.

The snail was backing in the gully, and the moist body, the color of tea with milk, came into view with the slowness of an enormous snake awakening from slumber. All was silence, except for the faint rattle of pebbles dropping from the snail's underside as it lifted its head. Clavering retreated again, sending more pebbles down into the gully.

The snail heard, and the enormous

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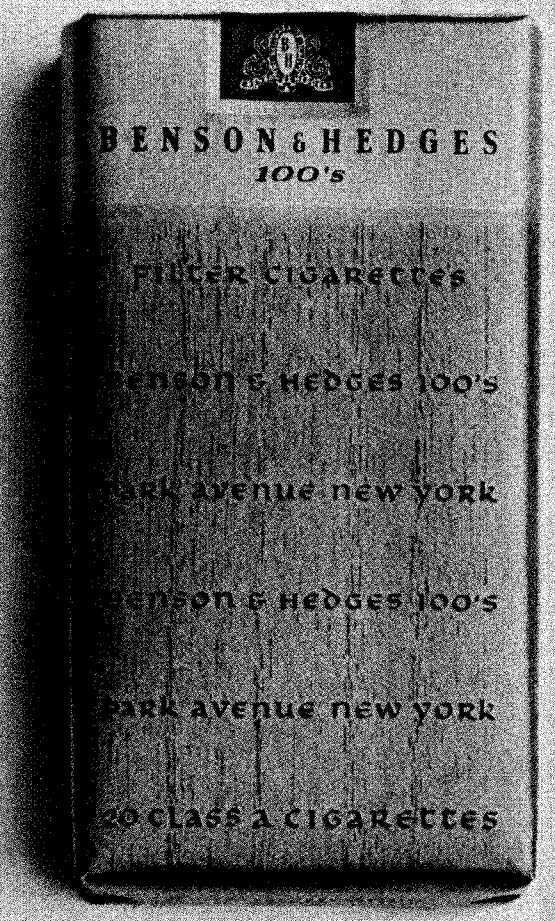

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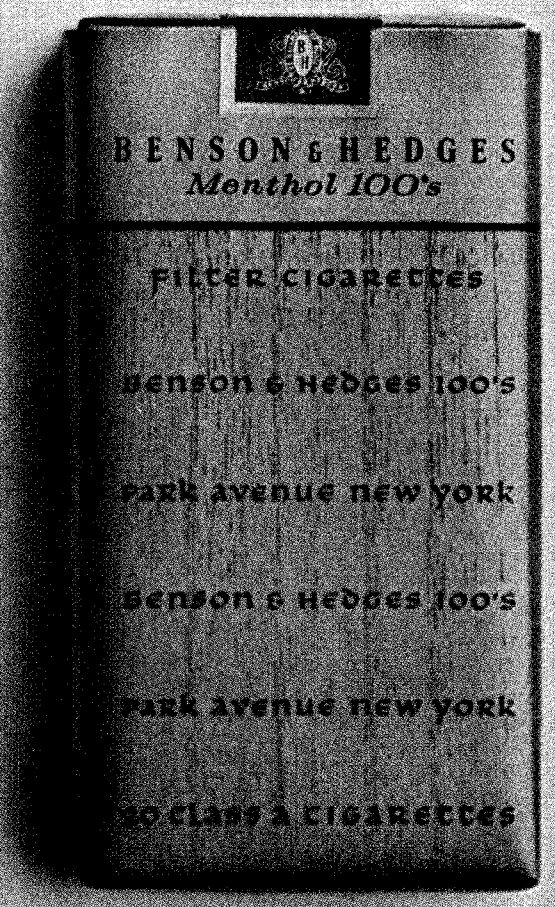

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head turned, very slowly, toward him.

The professor was paralyzed. The snail's face was gigantic—a face with drooping, scalloped cheeks, a face from which antennae six feet long extended, the eyes at their tips level with Clavering's own and scarcely ten feet away, bulging eyes that scrutinized him like a pair of oversized telescopes. The snail reared now, the antennae arching so that the eyes could keep him in view. A body ten yards long? No, more like fifteen!

The snail turned and moved toward him, and still Clavering did not budge. He knew about snails' teeth—twenty-odd thousand pairs of them even in a small garden snail, set in comblike structures. A snail this size, he knew, could chew through a tree faster than a woodsman's ax—and yet, though the snail was advancing up the bank, he stood for a few seconds simply to admire it. *His* snail! The professor unslung his camera and took a picture, just as the snail hauled its shell over the edge of the gully.

"You are magnificent!" he said in a soft, awestruck voice, and then he took a few steps backward.

It was pleasant to realize that he could skip nimbly about, so to speak, observing the snail from all angles, while it could only creep toward him at what seemed a rate of one yard in perhaps ten seconds. He would watch the snail for an hour or so, Clavering decided, then go back to the *Samantha* and write some notes. He would sleep aboard the boat, take more photographs tomorrow morning, then return to the Matusas.

He trotted some twenty yards away from the gully and turned to watch the snail approach. It was traveling with its head lifted three feet above the ground, and moving faster than before. Clavering changed his mind about taking another picture.

He thought now to look around for more snails, and though he saw none, he cautioned himself not to rule out the possibility of a mate. It would hardly be pleasant to be cornered by two snails, yet the idea excited him. After all, how could he not escape from two slow, lumbering creatures like these—these what? His mind stuck on peaches, because of the beautiful color of the shell. *Amygdalus persica?* No. Why not *Carnivora* (perhaps) *claveringi?* That could be improved upon, the professor thought as he walked backward, watching.

He saw a little grove of trees, all about twenty feet high, and realized that if he stood there, where the snail could not reach him, he would be able to get a close view. He entered the grove. The snail circled it, looking for an opening. When it found none large enough, it raised its head and surged forward upon the trees. Branches cracked, and one tree trunk snapped.

Professor Clavering, who had been aiming his camera, ducked and backed out of the grove. He caught a glimpse of a great belly gliding unhurt over a jagged tree trunk, of a circular mouth two feet across, open to show the still wider upper band of sharklike teeth munching automatically up and down. The snail cruised gently over the treetops, some of which sprang back into position as the great weight left them.

Click went the professor's camera.

What a sight that had been! He imagined entertaining friends in California with an account of it, substantiated by the photograph. Especially old Professor McIlroy of the biology department, who had laughed at him for spending several thousand dollars on a search sure to prove futile!

Professor Clavering was beginning to tire now, so he headed directly for the *Samantha.* Noticing that the snail had veered to a course that would intercept his if they both kept to their steady though different speeds, he chuckled and trotted for a bit. The snail also picked up speed, and the professor remembered the wide, upward rippling of the snail's body as it hurdled the trees. It would be interesting to see how fast the snail was on a straight course.

He reached what he was sure was the right spot of beach, but the *Samantha* was not there. Could he have made a mistake? No, surely this—— Then he caught sight of the *Samantha* drifting half a mile out on the ocean.

"Damn!" said Professor Clavering aloud. What had happened to the anchor? Did he dare try to swim to the boat? The distance frightened him, and it was growing steadily greater.

Pebbles rattled behind him, and he turned. The snail was hardly twenty feet away.

Professor Clavering trotted along the beach. There was bound to be some slit some cave, however small, where he could be out of reach of the snail. He wanted very much to rest for a while And he was annoyed by the prospect o a chilly night without blankets or food

He stopped dead, his shoes skidding on the sand. Ahead, not fifty feet along the beach, was another snail. It was a big as the one following him, but some what lighter in color. Its tail was in the sea, and its muzzle dripped water as i reared itself to get a look at the professor.

It was this snail, Clavering thought

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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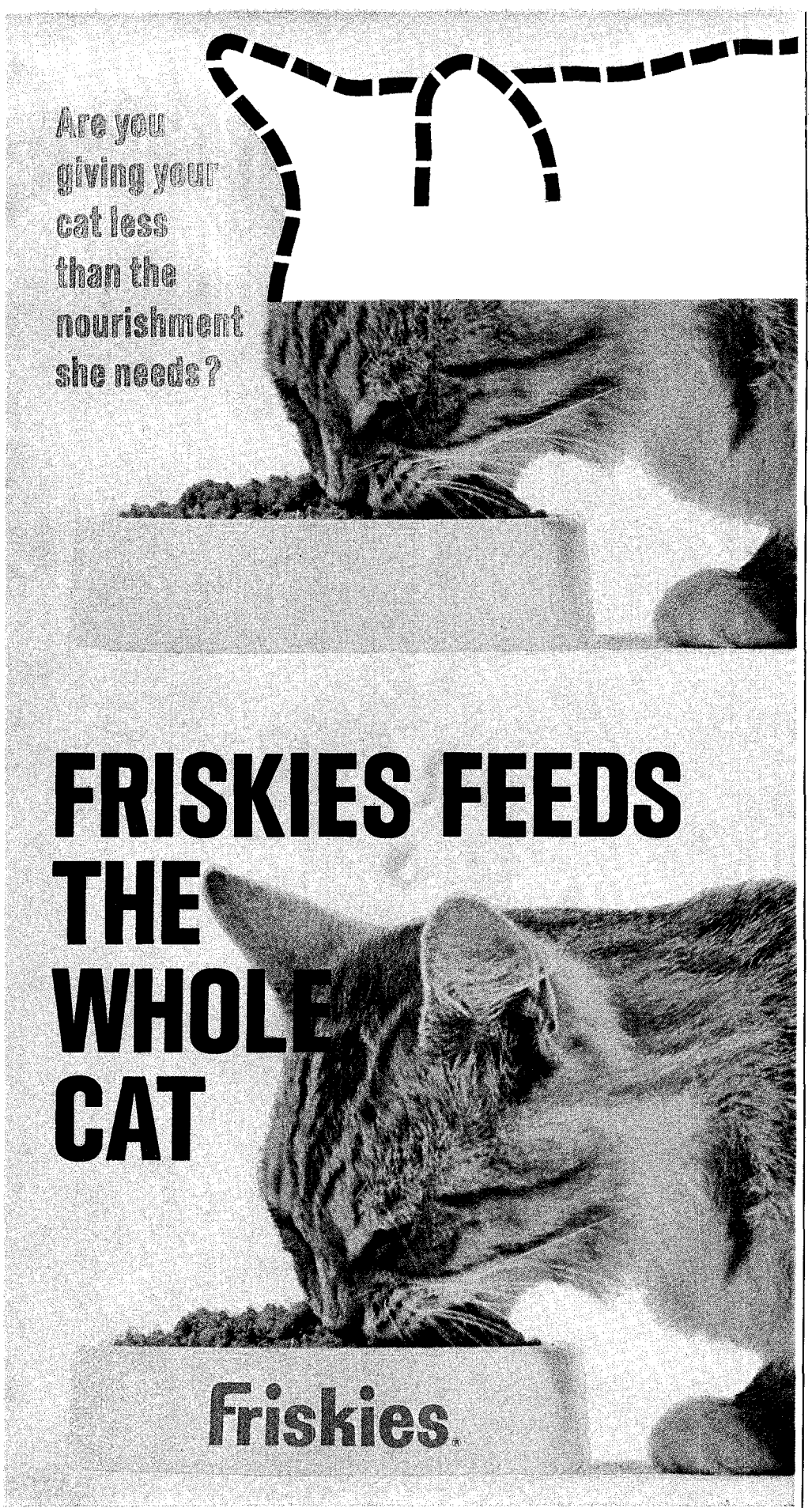

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that had chewed through the hemp rope and let the boat go free. Was there something about new hemp rope that appealed to snails? He put the question out of his mind—there was a snail before him and one behind him now, after all—and trotted on along the shore. The place most likely to provide crevices in which he could shelter was the gully where he had found the first snail. He headed for the gully, forcing himself to walk at a moderate pace and to breathe normally. After a while he sat down for a short rest.

The snails appeared, searching, lifting their heads to look slowly right and left. The professor sat motionless, his head lowered, hoping they would not see him. But the first snail spotted him and altered its course. Behind it came the second snail—wife? husband? There was no way of telling.

Professor Clavering rose, and the weight of his hatchet reminded him that at least he had a weapon. A minor wound, he thought, might discourage them. Knowing that the snails were hungry, that their teeth could tear his flesh more easily than they tore trees, and that he would certainly be eaten by these creatures if he was careless, he nevertheless drew the hatchet and faced them. He was not a very formidable figure with his slight paunch and pale, skinny legs, his height only about a third that of the snails, but above his glasses his brow was set with determination.

When the first snail reared, ten feet away, the professor advanced and swung his hatchet at the projecting mantle on its left side. But the blow fell inches short, and the weight of the hatchet pulled the professor off balance. He staggered and fell just under the snail's raised muzzle; there was barely time to roll aside before the descending mouth touched the ground where he had been. Angry now, he circled the snail, then swung a blow at the nacreous shell, which turned the blade after it had made no more than an inch-deep chip. He swung again, higher this time and toward the rear of the shell, trying for the lung beneath. It was of no use; his target was too high, ten feet from the ground, and again the hatchet took only a chip of shell. The snail began a turn to face him.

Now the professor confronted the second snail, rushed, and swung the hatchet, cutting it in the cheek so deeply that the blade sank up to its wooden handle. He had to tug to get it out; then, as the snail reared its head for a biting attack, he ran. Glancing back, he saw that no liquid—he had not, of course, expected blood—came from the cut in the snail's cheek. He couldn't see the cut, in fact. And the blow had certainly been no discouragement to the snail's advance.

Professor Clavering walked at a sensible pace toward the snails' lair on the other side of the island, but by the time he scrambled down into the gully, he was winded and his legs hurt. The gully, he saw with relief, narrowed to a sharp V; wedged in that, he would be safe. He was about to press into the V, which had an overhanging top rather like a cave, when he saw that what he had taken for some rounded rocks were moving—at least some of them were. They were baby snails, larger than good-sized beach balls. And judging from the way they were devouring th grass, they were hungry.

The head of one of the giant snail appeared high on the left, and as th snail began to descend the gully, a pai of antennae against the sky to the righ signaled the arrival of the second giant The professor had nowhere to turn ex cept toward the sea. Not a bad idea, h thought, as these were land snails. H waded far out and turned left, waist deep in the water. Land snails or not one of them was coming after him Clavering waded closer to the land; i thigh-deep water, he began to run.

The first snail had entered the wate boldly, and though it crept briefly at depth of no more than several inches, i showed signs, when it got abreast c Professor Clavering, of being willing t go into deeper water. The professc hoped the other snail—the mother, per haps—had stayed with the young. Bu it hadn't. It was following along th land, and accelerating. The professc plunged wildly for the shore; h would be able to move faster on soli ground.

He saw rocks—great igneous masse covering a slope down to the sea. Than goodness! There was bound to be niche, some place he could take shelte for the night. It would soon be dark, h knew; the sun was sinking rapidly int the ocean. Reaching the rocks, he flun himself into a narrow trough formed b a cluster of boulders. They rose two fe above his body, and the trough wa hardly a foot wide. A snail couldn't, h reasoned, stick its head down here an bite him.

The peach-toned curves of the snail shells appeared. One snail drew clos

I'll strike it with my hatchet! th professor swore to himself. I'll cut i face to ribbons with my knife! He w reconciled now to killing both adults- a pair of baby snails would be muc easier to take back, and they would c just as well.

The snail seemed to sniff like a do though inaudibly, as its muzzle ho ered above where the professor la Then, with majestic calm, it crept fc ward over the boulders. Its slimy boc covered the trough, blocking out light.

In panic, Professor Clavering dre his hunting knife and plunged it sever times into the soft flesh. The sn seemed not even to wince, and the pr fessor realized that the stabs could n have touched any vital organs. I pressed frantically with his palr against the snail's body, and felt h hands slip and scrape against rock. T firmness of the snail, his inability budge it, made him feel slightly sick f a moment. But at least, he thougl though his trench was covered, the regularity of the rocks permitted supply of air.

An hour passed. To the professor was like a prolonged hallucination. I dreamed that twenty thousand pairs teeth were chewing him into a heap ground meat, which the two giant sna shared with their offspring. To add his misery, he was cold and hungry a thirsty—the snail's cool body gave warmth at all. And yet, at last, the pr fessor slept.

Hours later, he woke to see st above him; the snail had departe Careful not to make a sound, he r and stepped from the trough. Free! a sandy stretch of beach only a f yards away, he lay down again a

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slept the remaining hours until dawn.

He woke just in time, as if by some sixth sense. The snails were moving toward him, one now only ten feet away. On trembling legs, the professor trotted inland and up a slope. An idea came to him: If he could push a boulder of, say, five hundred pounds—it would be possible with a lever—onto an adult snail in the gully, and smash the spot below which its lung lay, then the snail would die. He could think of no other means at his disposal that might inflict a fatal injury—his gun was on the drifting *Samantha*.

The professor brooded. It might be at least a week before help came from the Matusas—the *Samantha* would not necessarily float back there, would not necessarily be seen by another ship for days. And even if it was seen, would it be apparent she was drifting? And would the spotters make a beeline for the Matusas to report it? Not necessarily. The professor bent to lick some dew from a leaf. Straightening, he saw that the snails were twenty yards behind him now. The trouble is, I'm becoming exhausted, he thought. He was even more tired at noon. Only one snail still pursued him, but the other, he imagined, was probably resting or eating a treetop, in order to be fresh later.

And so the day passed. The professor would trot a hundred yards, then find a spot to rest. But he dared not shut his eyes, lest he sleep. Weakened also by a lack of food, he gave up the idea of dropping a rock down the gully onto a snail.

Dusk came. He had lost his bearings and could not find the slope where the igneous rocks had hidden him the night before. And both snails were following him now.

Professor Clavering took a deep breath and faced facts. He would have to make some kind of attempt to kill the snails—or at least frighten them off—before dark. After some thought, he chopped down a slender tree and hacked off its branches, the leaves of which were devoured by the two snails only moments after the branches struck the ground. Dragging his tree, the professor managed to sharpen one end of it with the hatchet as he moved along. It was too heavy to wield with one hand, but grasped with two it would serve as a kind of giant spear.

As soon as he was satisfied with the point, Professor Clavering turned and attacked, running with the spear pointed slightly upward, aimed at the first snail's mouth. He struck too low, and the tree point penetrated about four inches into the snail's chest. No vital organs here, he knew, except the long, straight esophagus, which in these giant snails would be set deeper than four inches.

The spear hung for a few seconds in the snail's flesh, then fell out onto the ground, and the professor retreated, pulling his hatchet from his belt. The second snail, coming up abreast of the other, paused to chew a few inches off the tree-spear; then, like its mate, it gave its attention to Professor Clavering. There was something contemptuous, he thought, something absolutely assured, about their slow progress toward him. It was as if they were thinking: Escape us a hundred, a thousand times, we shall finally reach you and devour every trace of you.

The professor advanced again, circled the snail he had stabbed with the tree-spear, and swung his hatchet at the rear of its shell, hacking over and over again at the same spot, for now he had a plan. After six or seven blows, the hacking operation had to be halted—the second snail was coming up behind him. An antenna brushed moistly against the professor's legs, staggering him as he stepped out of the way. He considered the value of more blows against the first snail—the shell was by no means broken—but he had no strength now for such an effort with the hatchet. He picked up his tree-spear, leveled it, and ran toward the snail with desperate purpose.

The spear struck where the hatchet blows had landed, and broke through the shell. The snail writhed, then reared up in pain.

Professor Clavering's hands had been lacerated by splinters, but he lifted the end of the drooping spear and pushed it with all his might farther into the snail, upward toward the lung. Then, since he was quite incapable of taking on the other snail in the same manner, he stumbled wearily away. In a moment he looked back. The unhurt snail was thirty feet behind him. The wounded snail, facing him, was motionless, half in and half out of its shell, suffering some silent agony of asphyxiation. Whether it died or not, it was no longer a threat. Professor Clavering walked on, feeling close to physical collapse himself.

Quite by accident, just before dark, he came upon the slope of igneous rocks, and again he found a trench that would give him shelter. Soon after he lay down, the snout of the second snail probed above the trench, but he tried not to think about it. He tried to plan ahead. Would it be best to remain in the trench tomorrow, to hope for rain for water? He fell asleep without deciding.

When he woke at dawn, he found that, as before, the snail had departed. His hands throbbed, and he saw that his palms were encrusted with dried blood and sand. It would be wise to wash them quickly in salt water.

But the giant snail lay between him and the sea; at his approach, it crept forward. Professor Clavering made a wobbling detour and reached the sea. He dipped his hands and moved them rapidly back and forth, then lifted water to his face. He longed to wet his dry mouth, warned himself that he should not, and yielded nevertheless, though he spat out the water almost at once.

The giant snail was very close now. Angrily, the professor flung handfuls of water at its face—land snails hated salt. The snail only lifted its head higher, out of range—an oddly graceful movement, like that of a horned gazelle. The professor trudged away, but not quickly enough—the snail's head came down on his shoulder; the great mouth clamped.

The professor screamed as shirt, flesh, and possibly a piece of bone were torn from his left shoulder. The snail's weight had pushed him into the sea, but he struggled to his feet and back to land. Blood streamed hotly down his side. He could not bear to look at his shoulder to see what had happened; he would not have been surprised if, in the next instant, his left arm had dropped off. He walked on aimlessly along the shore, still going faster than the snail.

Then, looking out toward the empty

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horizon, he saw a dark spot in the water. He stopped, wondering if this were some trick of his eyes, but in a moment he made out the double hull of a catamaran, and—— Surely that was Professor Stead's straw hat! Help had come from the Matusas!

"*Hello!*" Professor Clavering was shocked by the hoarse feebleness of his own voice. It could not possibly have been heard.

But there was hope now, and his strength increased. He ran forward along the shore to a little beach, and stood waving his good right arm. "Professor Stead!" he shouted. "This way! On the beach!" Yes, he could definitely see Professor Stead's hat and four dark native heads.

There was no answering shout, and Professor Clavering saw that the accursed snail was now only thirty feet away. Until the rescue party found him, he would have to protect himself. He saw a cranny in a rocky slope just behind the beach, and near it a boulder almost two feet in diameter. With what remained of his strength, the professor rolled the boulder up to the cranny, wriggled in behind it, and managed to pull the huge stone a bit closer to the cranny mouth. He was safely barricaded now against the snail.

"Professor Stead! This way!" he shouted again, but still no answer came. He peered out through a slit above the boulder.

The catamaran was just rounding a projection of land far to the right; in a moment it had vanished. But they were going to land, Professor Clavering told himself. Surely they were going to land!

A quarter of an hour passed, during which the giant snail crept to within ten feet of the cranny and lay still, waiting. And then Professor Stead, straw-hatted, a camera slung round his neck, came trudging down the beach behind the snail. "Here I am!" shouted Professor Clavering. "Here!"

Professor Stead halted, looked about, and saw the snail. The old man's shock was apparent. He fell back a step, then another, then came forward again, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Look out," Professor Clavering called. "It's dangerous."

"It is?" Professor Stead stood with his eyes fixed upon the giant snail. His voice shook. "After all these years! You can't imagine how I—— It exists! It exists!" He unslung his camera and aimed it with trembling hands.

"Be careful," Professor Clavering warned, though the snail had not moved. "Call the natives. Tell them to bring the boat."

Only now did Professor Stead seem to realize who had called. Giving the snail a wide berth, he trotted up to the barricaded cranny.

"So there you are, Clavering! We saw your boat adrift, and supposed you had been swept overboard and drowned. Nevertheless, I felt we might just have a look over the island." The old man's voice rose again. "But I never supposed to see this incredible snail! So much of my life spent searching, so many years——"

"Call the natives, please!" Professor Clavering interrupted him. "I'm hurt. Get me to a doctor!"

"They're looking for you on the other side of the island." Professor Stead spoke quite slowly now, as if he were puzzling something out. "They'll come in time. Yes, in time. Half an hour, perhaps."

He put his camera carefully back into its case, and laid both hands against the boulder that sealed the cranny. "Here, I'll help you," he said, pushing. "Let me help you."

"No, no, not till the natives have driven off the snail!" cried Professor Clavering from behind the boulder. To his astonishment, Professor Stead paid no heed, and then suddenly the astonishment turned to dread. Professor Stead was *not* going to wait for the natives! He was going to tell the world that there had been no trace of Professor Clavering on the island, that he must surely have been swept from his boat and drowned. Professor Stead was going to claim the giant snail as his own discovery!

Professor Clavering clawed frantically at the boulder, but Professor Stead was in a better position. The boulder rolled away, and as it did the giant snail roused itself. Ignoring Professor Stead, who had prudently drawn aside, the snail surged forward into the cranny. Professor Clavering sank weakly to his knees. It was a nightmare of some sort, and, as in a nightmare, he could not move.

"*Something-or-other steadi*," Professor Stead murmured, gloating. "My name shall live!"

These were the last words Professor Clavering heard, and their sound was muffled by the crunching of thousands of pairs of teeth in his own flesh. □

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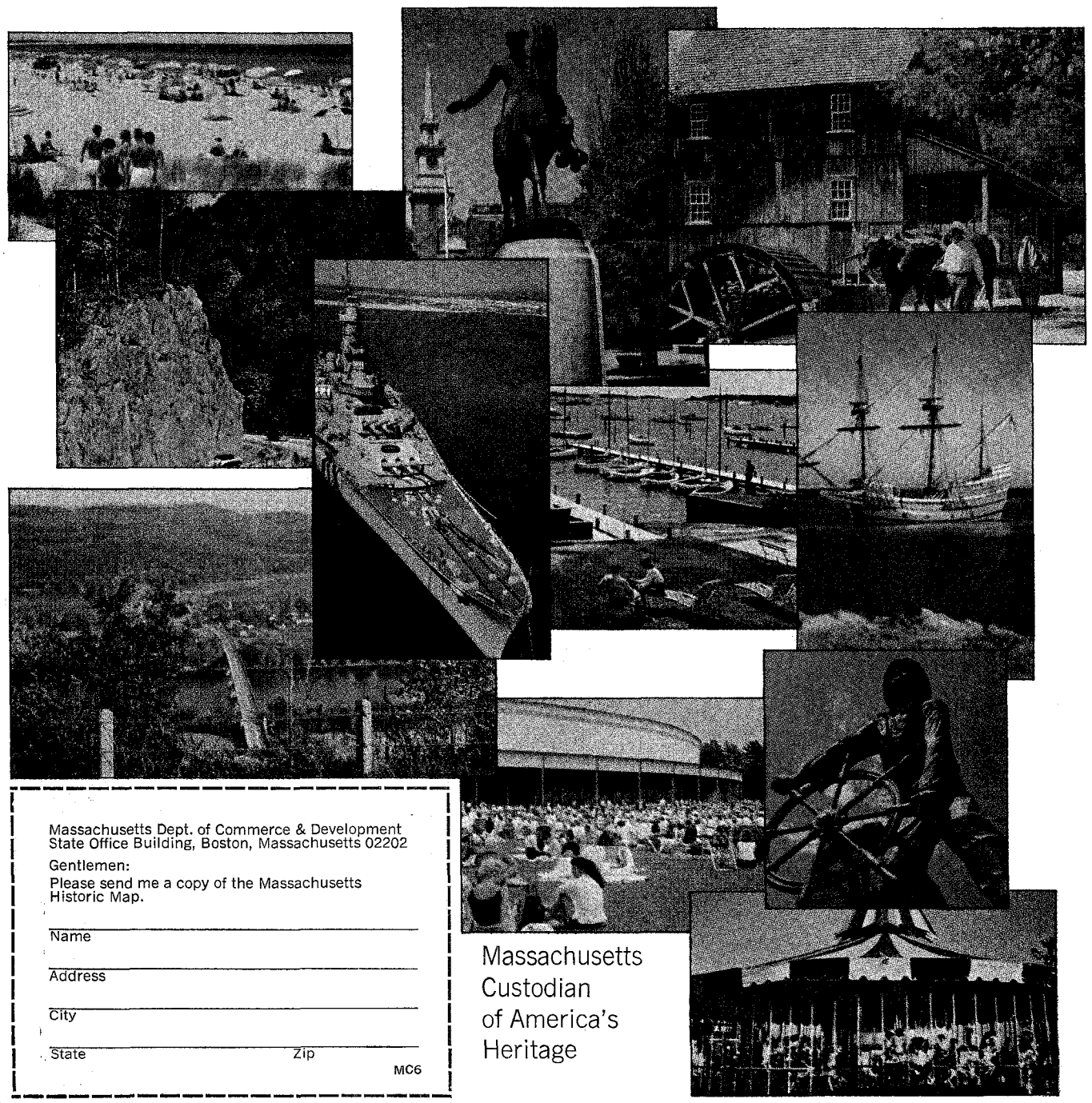

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MADNESS IN THE FAMILY

By William Saroyan

There was only one cure for Uncle Vorotan– but who wants to make such a sacrifice?

Going mad was a specialty of the family. Until a man had gone mad, it was understood that he was still a boy. If he never did, he was not the equal of those who had. Only a few reached the age of thirty unseized, and, over a period of a century, only two or three members of the family went the whole distance unseized. More than a few took the trip several times, after which they were considered wise men, or perhaps even holy men, as if they had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as, in a sense, they had.

With the women it was another matter, although most of them took the trip too; but with the help of the other women in the family, their journeying was fairly well concealed. Women on the trip tended to reject their children, their brothers and sisters, their parents, their parents' parents, and themselves. Their madness was justified and reasonable, which may have made its concealment a relatively simple matter. The demands on women for diplomatic behavior were so severe and so taken for granted by the men that madness was upon the women practically all of the time.

With the men the madness took several traditional forms, including a repudiation of God, or rather of Jesus and Christianity, since nothing but trouble had come of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, and the Church. Another common form of the madness was a total rejection of the human race, based upon ancient and contemporary evidence that the human race was criminal and contemptible. Oddly, however, this rejection stopped at the threshold of the madman himself, who, during the seizure, whether brief or prolonged, considered himself alone to be the only hope of the human race. His wife was a stranger—some crazy man's daughter. His kids were tricks played on him by shabby genetics. His brothers and sisters were simpletons, his parents sleepwalkers.

Yet another form of the madness was a conviction that all was in vain, all was corrupt, all was useless, all was hopeless.

In Bitlis my father, Manak, was considered wise and worthy because he had made the trip to madness before he was twelve, which was uncommon. During the year of his rage, he went about his life and work pretty much the same as ever, except that people avoided him, because anybody who looked him full in the face saw that he was on his way, and not receptive to small talk. But once the trip was over, there wasn't an easier man to have around. Difficult questions were put to him by the

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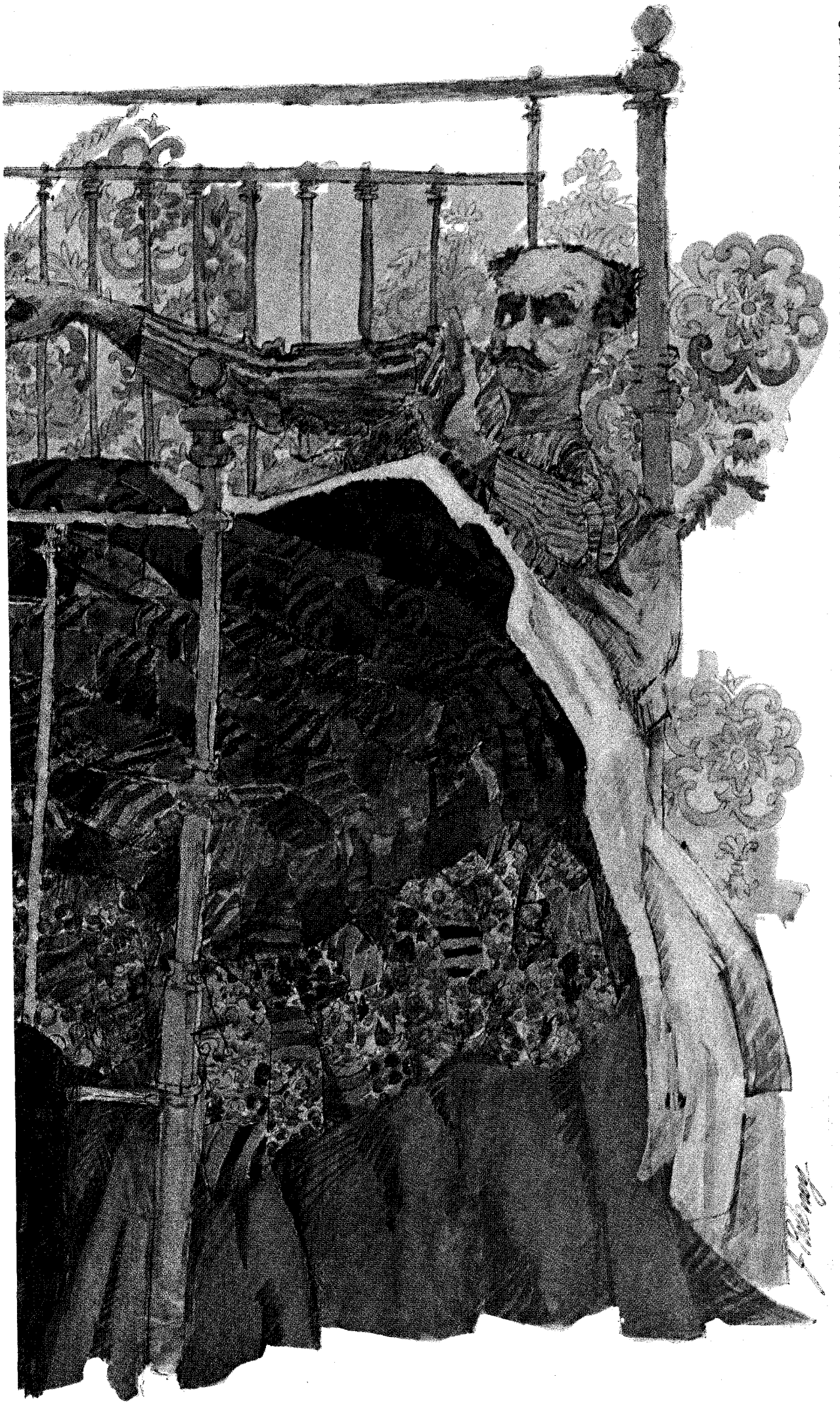

"I'm not going anywhere," the sick man said. "But you are—out of this house!"

oldest men, which he answered immediately, with unmistakable appropriateness. In the most complicated disputes, he was called upon to pass judgment, and his decisions were instantly accepted by both sides.

When the tribe picked up and came to America, first to New York, and then to California, the family madness continued, but the form changed. Of course, this was to be expected, since America was another kind of place entirely. The whole family hadn't one member buried here. Everybody was on the surface of the country, flat on his feet, selling watermelons, or plowing a row of vines.

We were in Fresno, but we were nowhere, too. How could we really be in a place until death had caught up with one of us, and we had buried him and knew he was there?

This, in fact, was the form the madness took in my Uncle Vorotan, the tailor who worked for Bloom Brothers, in their shop on Merced Street.

Each evening when he reached his home, he asked both his wife and his mother, "Has anybody died yet, to heal this fearful loneliness, this aimless walking about, this emptiness and disconnection?" And each evening, everybody in every branch of the family was not only still alive but getting stronger and bigger.

Word got around to everybody in the family, including the kids, that Vorotan had gone mad—in a new way, compelled by the New World. He wanted somebody to die, and to be buried, so that he, as well as the rest of us, might know that a tradition had been established, that a culture must inevitably follow, and that, consequently, we might all be permitted to believe that we were in fact in Fresno, in California, in America, and, in all probability, would stay. Kids, who are supposed to be easy to frighten, rather cherished Vorotan during his madness, even when he looked at one of them and said, "Open your mouth, please," and after looking in, said, "All in order." But some of the older men felt uncomfortable when he looked at them, and some of the women, especially those who had married into the family, cried out, "Don't look at me with those eyes. I'm in perfect health, and pregnant!" And later, such a woman might say to her husband, "I really believe he'll kill somebody, so he can go to the funeral, and end his madness, and be at peace with himself again."

If anybody took even slightly ill, everybody in the immediate family was cautioned not to let word reach Vorotan, for on several occasions he had gone to the family, to the bed of the one who was ill, and said, "Yes, I believe you will be the one to save us. Do not be afraid, do not hold back, the best Bashmanians are already in that great homeland in the sky, and the rest of us will soon follow." Whereupon the man in bed shouted, "I've got a stupid cold in the head. I'm not going anywhere, but *you* are—out of this house!"

Vorotan's madness went on and on, because nobody in the family died, even though there were eleven men and women in their eighties.

Early one morning, however, old Varujan, the gunsmith, was found dead in his bed, as if he were only asleep. At last, the Bashmanians had their first dead in the New World. Vorotan was overwhelmed by the good news, donated ten dollars toward the cost of the funeral, made a short talk at the graveside, and was instantly healed of his madness.

"Now, at last, we are here," he said. "We can breathe easier. Varujan, old in years but young in spirit, has saved us all, our first traditionalist in the New World. He is in Ararat, where we shall all go."

Ararat was the Armenian cemetery, which in those days had only a few graves, but is now almost as well populated as Fresno, and with more interesting people, including Vorotan himself. □

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Conrad (Lord Jim)

Joseph Teodor Konrad Nale

Born - Dec. 3, 1857, in Ukr

Died - Aug. 23, 1924, in Engl

Career and Writing

Much time at sea, for

these sixteen years. Eng

Began writing late

Did not learn

Became English citiz

"Lord Jim" publish

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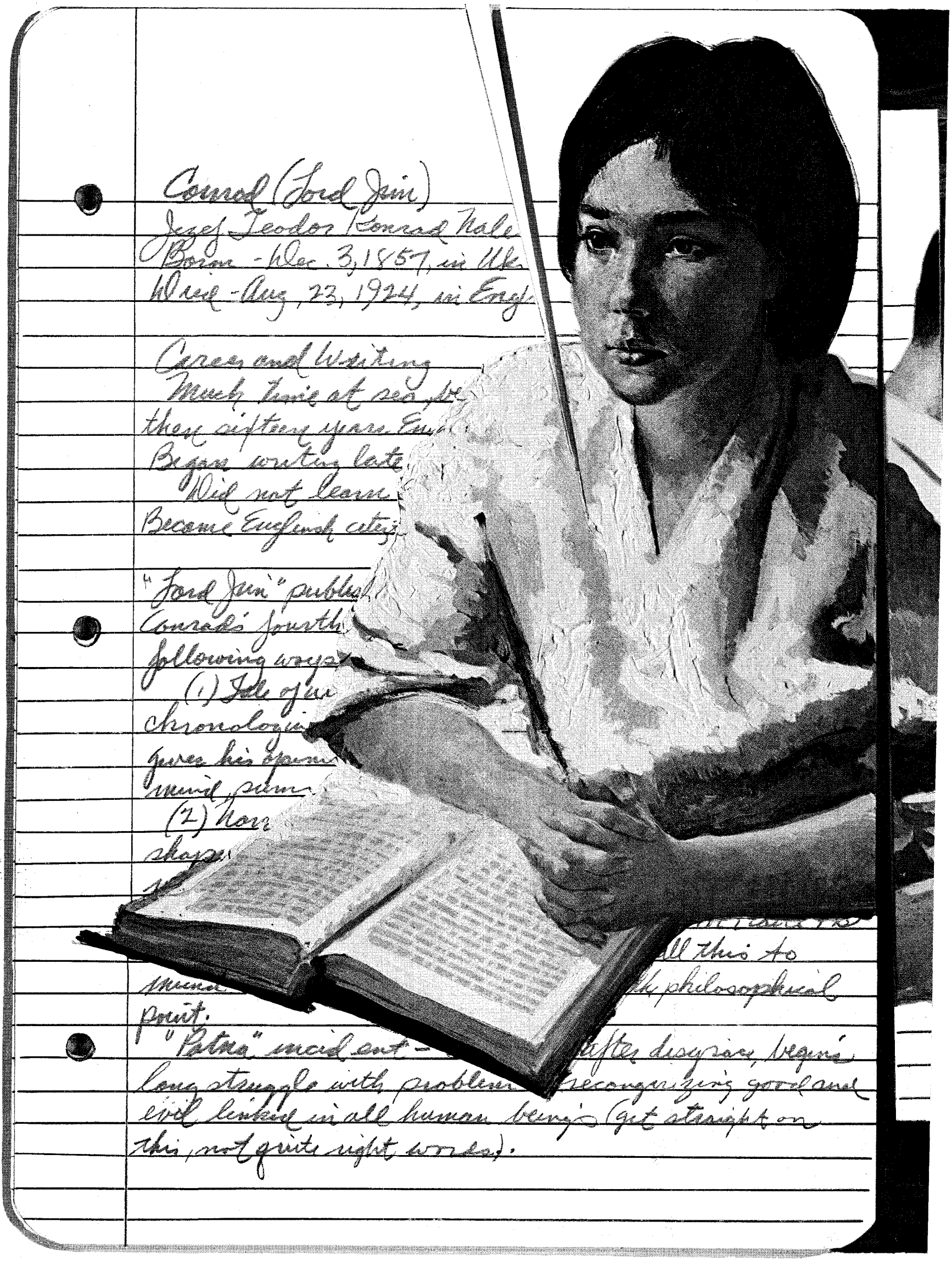

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By FREDELLE BRUSER MAYNARD *Illustrated by Louis Glanzman*

THE RED DRESS

'I don't write exam papers for pay!' I told my flunking classmate. But he was not entirely dishonest. Would helping him dishonor me?

In a well-regulated universe, great revelations would be heralded by a sign—a star in the east, an angel with a flaming sword. But to me they have often come unsung. Who, knowing Moishe Bloch, would have supposed him to be a herald?

It was 1941, my third year at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. Although the war too was then in its third year, I had by some marvel of obtuseness remained largely unaware of it. The war was not my business. *My* business was study, pursued with single-minded passion. It would be nice to say that I was driven by pure devotion to learning—nice, but untrue. My parents had come from Russia with no money, little schooling, and a great hope for the future. Here, in the New World, the children would thrive. What did it matter if the *Mama* and *Tate* worked hard in a country store? *Alles far de kinder*, everything for the children—the breast of chicken, the softest shoe leather, the finest education. Through education, we would enter the promised land. And so I studied to win scholarships, won scholarships so I might continue to study, and asked no questions as the wheel went round.

In this curiously mindless, directionless scholarship, I was not unique. Jewish students, the children of immigrants, dominated the prize lists in those days, though they were not all of one stamp. There was always, I remember, a small core of intellectuals who followed their own stars in defiance of course requirements and exams. They were to be found in the dim corners of the cafeteria, arguing over cold coffee about Nietzsche, or in the music room, with a wheezy phonograph cranking out Beethoven's Ninth. These people did well, but never gloriously. A much larger group, to which I belonged, consisted of professional prizewinners. Our fathers were junk collectors or proprietors of little country stores, our mothers sent bagels and loving prayers at exam time, and we were driven, all of us, by a single, simple urge—to succeed. Success involved attending classes faithfully, taking copious notes, reading all the commentaries, memorizing key passages, analyzing old exam papers, and never, never allowing oneself to be diverted by irrelevant considerations like "What does it all mean?"

One year I took a course in the philosophy of Kant. I found it unbelievably dull. Was this the book that had launched a thousand speculations—this collection of bloodless theorems? Nevertheless, I committed to memory not only great swatches of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but also of the leading critiques of the *Critique*. The day of the final exam, as I stood biting my nails outside the room in which it was to be held, I was accosted by one of the *real*

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intellectuals, a hot-eyed young fellow named Tevya. Tevya had missed most of the lectures and was reputed to be in the professor's bad books. "Well," he said with a heartiness inappropriate to the condemned, "have you made up your mind about Kant?"

"Made up my mind?" What was there to make up one's mind about? You remembered, or you didn't remember.

"Have you decided whether the world's your show, or whether you're the world's show?" Tevya sauntered on, not dreaming that he had just flung open a door.

So *that* was what Kant was all about! Why, in that case . . . But the proctors were signaling. This was no moment to think about Kant. I tore to my seat, turned over the question paper, and began to write. I never thought about Kant again. That year I added the philosophy prize to my honors; Tevya, I believe, failed the course.

By the end of 1941, a sense of the war had reached even the most disengaged scholars. France had fallen; Germany was driving forward in the Balkans and in North Africa. Uniforms were everywhere. Some boys had left the university and joined up; those with unsatisfactory grades had been forced to leave.

I was riding the streetcar from my rooming house to school one day, at the beginning of the examination period, when Moishe Bloch edged his way toward me. I hunched into my book, prepared to freeze him out. Moishe was one of those pathetic hangers-on who is propelled through an institution of higher learning, not by any desire of his own but only by the absolute determination of his parents. Weak, soft, easygoing, he would have been happy, I think, to be a pants presser, which his father had been before luck and shrewdness made him a successful garment manufacturer. Moishe had scrabbled through two years of university work with the help of tutors and summer sessions; still carrying "conditionals" from the previous term, he was not likely to last much longer. Now, his foolish face thrust close to mine, he breathed strongly in my ear. "Listen," he said, "I got to talk to you."

I kept my eyes on my book. "Excuse me. I'm studying. I have an exam this afternoon."

"Look, please, it's important. The army, it's out to get me for sure." He made a small noise, something between a groan and a belch. I tried not to smile, imagining him tightly buttoned into an army tunic, shivering in the front line, or parachuting down from a fighter plane, his great quivering buttocks looming over Tunis or Sidi Barrâni. "Sorry," I said crisply. "I don't have any influence with the army."

"No, no, you don't see." He really was unbelievably thick. "It's my English. I have next week to make a paper on *Lord Jim*, by Joseph Conrad. No paper, I'm through, washed out, *kaput*. And my father—if I go overseas, it kills him, such a heart condition he has. Look, I know English is for you no trouble. Write me a paper. Whatever you say, price no object."

I can't say I felt virtuous indignation. Mostly I was just annoyed. Moishe Bloch never courted my favors when a fraternity formal was coming up. (Not that I'd have cared to go with *him*, anyway.) And now here he was at exam time, bothering me with his problems.

"I don't write papers for pay," I said. "Anyway, I've got four exams myself next week. I need every minute." The streetcar had stopped in front of the Arts building. I pushed past Moishe and got off.

At lunch that day, the table buzzed with scandal. "What do you think of old Rosen?" my friend Hannah asked. "He was caught cheating on the history exam." She made a sharp clacking noise and drew her finger across her throat.

I unwrapped my salami sandwich. "How'd he do it?"

"Played sick and got permission to go to the washroom. They sent a proctor to check, and there he was with his text open, reading like mad."

"Serves him right." I bit into my sandwich.

Hannah was a softie. "Oh, I don't know. I feel sorry for him. Plenty of kids cheat and get away with it. It's the dumb ones that get caught."

It was on the tip of my tongue to tell her about Moishe Bloch. She'd have been interested. But Hannah was still talking: "My guess is that everyone shaves a point some time, one way or another. Haven't you *ever?*"

I grinned. "Cheated? What for? Who would I cheat *from?*"

"Pardon me. I forgot. Well, lesser minds are not so immune to temptation."

"No, seriously," I said. "What

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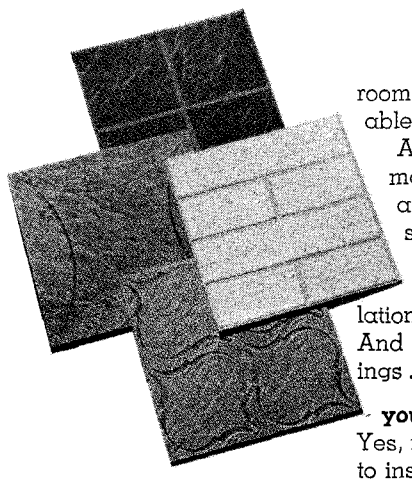

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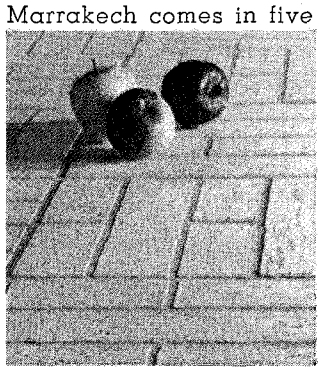

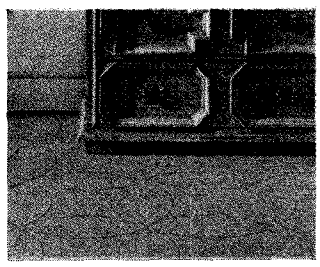

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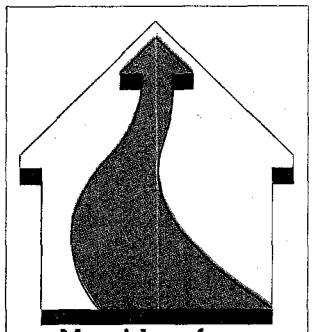

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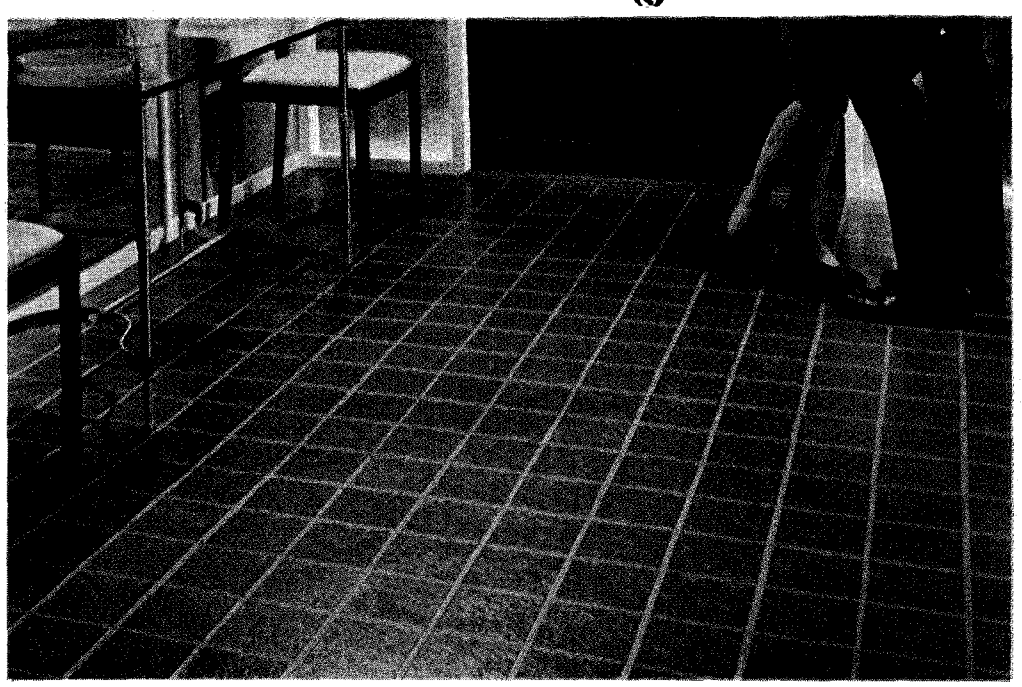

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Rosen did is—well, it's a contradiction of everything a university education should mean. I don't have any sympathy for people like that."

I thought about Moishe again on the way back to my rooming house. I was changing streetcars at Portage and the Mall, and Hudson's Bay had an all-red window. There were red sweaters, red coats, and dead center, a brilliant red jersey dress that knocked your eye out. It was the kind of thing worn by Heather Sanderson, whose father donated some of the scholarships I slaved for. I imagined myself in it, swinging down the university corridors while heads turned. If I were the kind of person who wrote papers for money, I could have a dress like that.

I wasn't really surprised when the phone rang that evening. "It's a boy," my landlady said, handing me the receiver. From the sound of the breathing, it might have been a whole regiment of boys—a whole family, anyway. They had probably *all* gathered round. "Look," Moishe began, "I'm sorry what I said this morning. I mean, I know you don't do anything is not kosher. All I want is you should tutor me."

"*Tutor* you? At this stage of the game?" I'd done a certain amount of tutoring during the term at seventy-five cents for a generously interpreted hour, but exam time was different.

"Well, look at it like this. I have to write a paper on *Lord Jim*. So you tutor me in *Lord Jim*, and then I write the paper. Everything aboveboard, yes? You name the price."

I hesitated. It wasn't the most aboveboard proposition I'd ever heard. On the other hand, it wasn't exactly dishonest either. If I worked on Moishe for one solid evening, I might really get him in shape to write his own paper. The red dress was ten dollars. I gathered my nerve. "Would an evening's tutoring be worth ten dollars to you?"

Over the wires, Moishe leaped to embrace me. I could see the happy flush, the eager eyes. "Perfect, perfect! You got yourself a deal. So when should I come?"

A new misgiving shook me. "You have read *Lord Jim?* Because if not, the deal's off."

The voice oozed and bubbled. "Sure, sure, how should I not read it? But it's a hard book. You know? Some things I could use a little help."

The next evening, in my room, Moishe sat across the table from me. He had brought his copy of the novel, a notebook, and a freshly sharpened pencil.

"Now, just to get started," I said briskly, "suppose you tell me what you think *Lord Jim* is all about. What's the central theme of the book?"

He smiled happily. "Well, Conrad was attempting to illustrate in Jim's weakness and strength the mystery of human character and to reveal the hidden springs of human conduct. He shows . . ."

After that first sentence, with its manifestly un-Blochian cadence, I couldn't believe it. *Masterplots*. I'd have guessed anyway, but as it happened I'd taken a look at *Masterplots* that very day, to refresh my memory on details. The liar, the vermin, the unspeakable fraud!

"You haven't read *Lord Jim!*" I shouted. "Not a line. You've memorized a crib!"

Moishe looked hurt. "I couldn't help it. Such a big book, and I read slow. But you help me now, and I read it this summer, I promise."

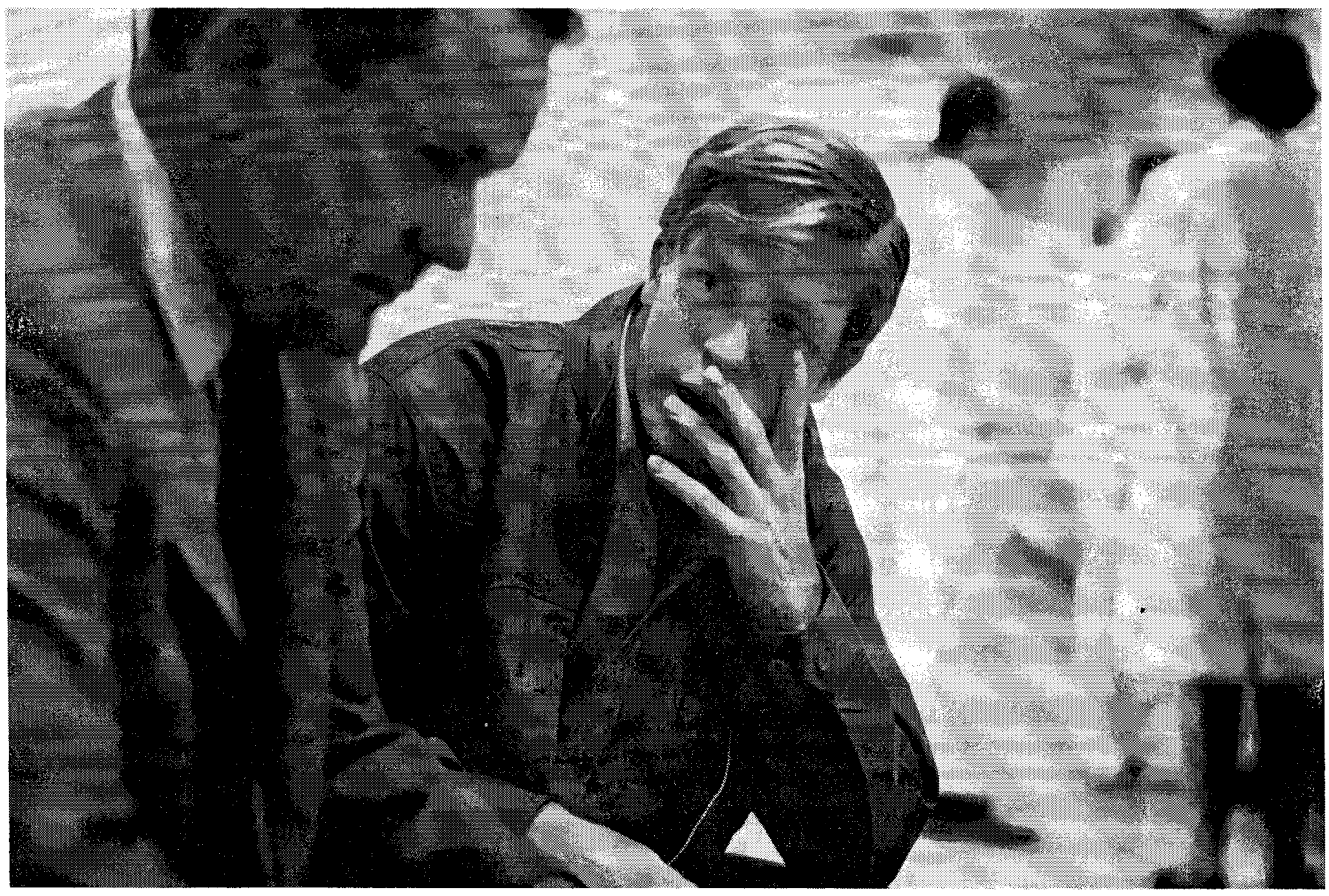
"I don't give a damn about your promises!" But if I turned him out, as he deserved, I lost the ten dollars. I made up my mind. "Okay. We're reading it *now*, together."

He paled. "The whole book? But I need by next week this paper!"

"No, of course not the whole book! Just key passages. We'll look at the most important parts, and I'll fill in the rest." I opened my copy, with its precious underlinings and marginal scribbles ("Cf. Hardy," "N.B. Conrad's theme of illusion," and so on.) "Here, start reading."

It was awful, far worse than I could possibly have imagined. He did not know the meaning of "aggressive" or "immaculate," thought "humane" was synonymous with "human." He did not even know what a parson was. ("Parson? Yeah, sure, I know. Parson, person—same thing.") Irony escaped him entirely; no question of attempting illumination there.

I drove him furiously through the



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account of the parsonage from which Jim had come. "Now, what is the point of this description? Why do we need it?"

Moishe beamed, anxious to please. "We don't."

At nine o'clock I gave up. "All right. We can't possibly get through the book this way. We'll take another tack. You decide on a topic for your paper, and I'll talk about *that*. And"—I tried to sound casual—"you can take notes."

Rapturous, a spirit released from hell, Moishe closed *Lord Jim*, and offered his notebook. "I have here a list."

"'Conrad's View of the Nature and Fate of Man,'" I read. "That's fine. We'll do that one."

He shook his head. "Never. This is the second time already I'm failing this course. Bartlett knows on such a subject I can't possibly write."

"This paper is for *Bartlett?*"

"Yeah, sure. What difference for who?"

It made a lot of difference. I didn't especially mind putting something over on most members of the English department—the young men who courted popularity by turning classes into bull sessions on sex, or the old men who riffled wearily through their notes, reading interminably from such scholars as Legouis and Cazamian. But Bartlett was like God—aloof, inscrutable, omniscient, the one teacher whose good opinion mattered. How could I foist on *him* this shoddy deception?

I turned back to the list of possible topics. "How about this one? 'The Style of Joseph Conrad.'" Somewhere I'd read a good article on that. I could probably . . .

"Unh-unh. That Bartlett never would buy. The way I see it, there is here only one subject my speed. 'What *Lord Jim* Means to Me.'"

Of course. A perfect duffer's topic, demanding neither knowledge nor subtlety. The sort of thing no really good student would touch. I reached out for this soiled undergarment of a subject, anxious to cloak it with the familiar folds of critical drapery.

"Conrad's great novel strikes a familiar chord in the heart of every sensitive reader. Jim's pathetic romanticism, coupled as it is with the fatal habit of, as Hamlet said, thinking too precisely on the event . . ." I stopped. Moishe's pencil had, after the first few words, stopped scratching. He looked sick.

"Nah," he said. "This ain't me. It's got to be—you know—what this story says to a plain schmo. Like what has *Lord Jim* got to do with Moishe Bloch?"

What indeed? Come to think of it, what did *Lord Jim* have to do with *me?* I had read the novel carefully, several times, underlining and annotating. I had committed to memory Stein's great speech on men and butterflies—"A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea." I had distinguished myself on the final exam. But the truth of the matter was that *Lord Jim* had never meant anything to me—except, perhaps, a test of mastery. Moishe's querulous interruption caught me, held me. I felt myself rocking, a small, badly rigged ship on an ocean of immense significance. A phrase from the novel echoed hollowly: *In the destructive element immerse.* . . . I jumped.

"You see . . ." But what was he to see? What did *I* see? The waters moved. I was Lord Jim, deep in the hold of the doomed ship, holding my lantern to the bulging bulkhead. Any minute now the ocean would overwhelm me. "It's like this. Jim is such a decent fellow, really. He wants to be good, and he thinks he *is* good. He's one of us." Moishe looked puzzled. "I mean—well, *you* have certain ideas about what you want to do, or be—and I do—and we try to live up to those ideas."

Moishe nodded, frowning a little. I felt a sudden compassion, thinking how hard it must be for him to pursue his parents' dream.

"So we move along like Jim," I said, "always getting ready for the big moment when we can prove ourselves. And we feel secure, like Jim that night on the *Patna*, with the big ship sliding over the quiet water, the charts all laid out so neatly, with the compass and dividers and the pencil line marking the course. But all the while danger's coming. Black smoke pours from the funnel, and the wheel chains grind. Everything explodes all of a sudden—you know, like water at the back door when you're braced for fire at the front—and there's no time to get your hero suit on. You don't think or anything"—Moishe was listening, round-eyed now—"you just *jump!* And then you don't ever understand what happened. Did you jump because somebody told you to? Because, deep down, you're the jumping kind? Was it just bad luck that you found yourself on a sinking ship? Or did you, somehow, go out and *find* that ship, the way Jim found the *Patna?*"

I was talking faster now, with real excitement, and at the same time I was ashamed of my excitement. Good Lord, *I* wasn't on trial! I was just helping a fellow with a paper. But the book had taken hold, and Moishe's question came as from the depths of myself. "So what's the answer?"

"Don't you see? There *isn't* any answer, ever! We're always in a mist—'at the heart of a vast enigma,' Conrad says. But every time we fail our dream, we become less able to realize it next time. At the end, when Jim practically delivers his friends to a crook, it's because he has a kind of crookedness in himself."

Moishe sighed, a balloon slowly sputtering. "I didn't know it was such a sad book."

"Sad?" I was startled. "Well, I guess it is. If you care about being good, you always find out you're not good enough. And somehow, knowing that, you've got to pull your torn coat about you and stand as straight as you can."

I don't remember saying good night to Moishe. He left an envelope with ten dollars in it; later, word came by the grapevine that Bartlett was pleased with the paper. I bought the red dress. But the first time I tried it on, the wool itched terribly; the next time, I stood turning before the mirror, and the dress seemed to make me look fat.

Months passed. I heard that Moishe Bloch had been taken by the army, and felt a kind of mean relief. So I hadn't done anything after all. . . . And still the red dress hung at the back of my closet. At the end of the year, I crumpled it up in a box of old clothes and gave it to the Salvation Army. □

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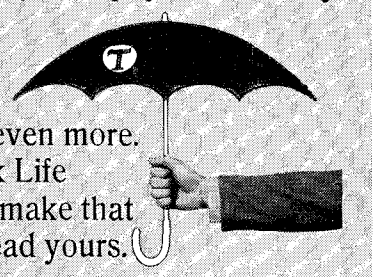

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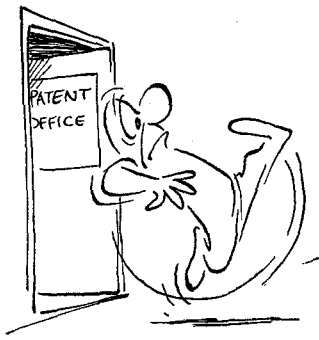
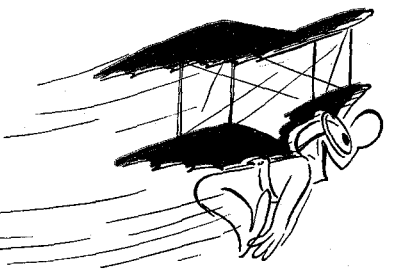
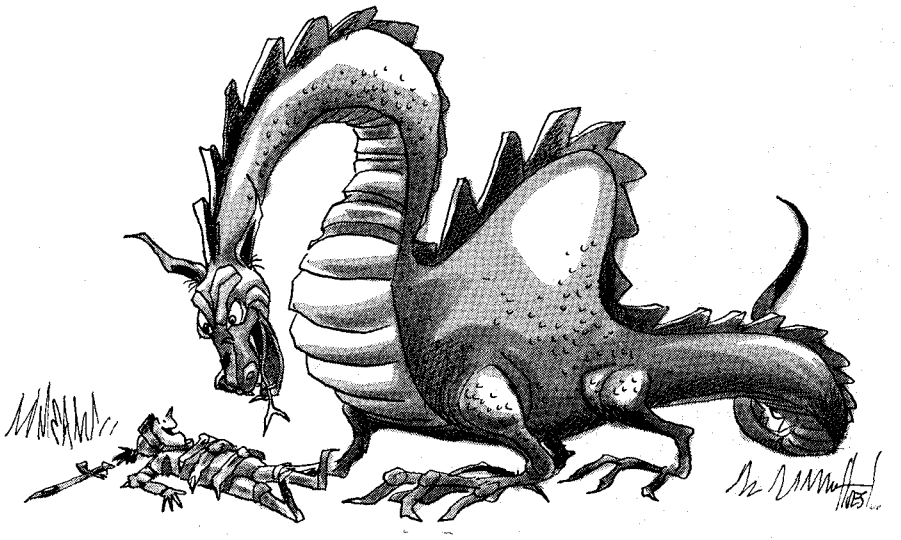


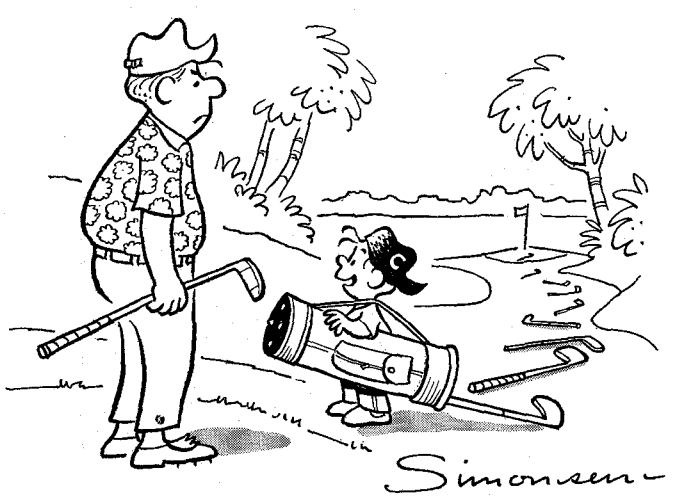


Post scripts



"How about two out of three?"

"You know, Miss Schluter, there's not a mean bone in his body."



"Yessir . . . my first time out . . . how'd ya guess?"

"It's from my girl—she's going to marry a wonderful guy she met at a Vietnam protest."

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The Hiram Walker distillery in Walkerville, Ontario, before the turn of the century.

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The St. Lawrence Seaway, for example, is one of the most heavily trafficked inland waterways anywhere. A tour of Montreal reveals one of the most efficiently planned, yet beautiful cities in the world. And all through Canada you'll find art centers, museums and fine universities.

The people who make Canadian Club are proud to be part of this growing nation. But unlike Canada itself, Canadian Club hasn't changed a drop over these hundred years. It was first made in Walkerville (in what is now Ontario) and is still made only there. And it's still made in the same way that Mr. Hiram Walker created way back in 1858.

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In the next hundred years Canada will change a lot more. But Canadian Club will be the same wonderful whisky that it has been since 1858. We wouldn't want it any other way.

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Skelton, always the first to arrive in the morning, walks toward the rehearsal hall.

'I'M NUTS AND I KNOW IT'

Everybody who works with television's top-ranked comedian has a wild story about his antics, but Red Skelton claims that as long as 'I make them laugh they ain't gonna lock me up.'

By BILL DAVIDSON / Photos by Don Ornitz

It was seven A.M., and the parking lot was empty at the huge CBS Television City studios in Hollywood. As the Rolls-Royce drove in, the sleepy cop at the gate sprang to attention. At the wheel of the $20,000 car was a tall man with shaggy cinnamon-colored eyebrows. He was driving with his left hand. In his right hand was a tape-recorder into which he was dictating.

"Good morning, Mr. Skelton," the cop said. The car slithered up to a parking stall marked RED SKELTON, and the nation's top-rated television comedian (his show was No. 1 in the Nielsen that week) got out. He was wearing a 1940's-style gray suit with wide lapels and wide-pleated trousers. He coughed and wheezed asthmatically for a moment and then skirted the empty parking lot and went through a door marked ARTISTS ENTRANCE. Inside, behind a desk, were two other cops. Skelton said, "We had a girls' basketball team in the studio last week. Called themselves The Redheads. You know what a redhead is? A latrine on a Russian warship."

A prop statue was standing near the cops' desk. Skelton threw his arms around it and said, "I don't like girls like this. They're too dumb." The cops laughed. "Do you know your studio's still locked, Mr. Skelton?"

"No," said Skelton, "but I know the dirty lyrics to *Winchester Cathedral*." He removed a large unlighted cigar from his mouth (he chews, but never smokes, about 20 cigars a day), and he flicked imaginary ashes down the bosom of the statue. The cops laughed again. "You don't have to open the studio for me," Skelton said. "I know how to sneak in through the men's room." He solemnly shook hands with each of the two guards and disappeared into the cavernous deserted building. For the next hour and a half he sat alone in an empty rehearsal hall, picking out sad little tunes on a piano and recording them on a tape recorder.

It wasn't until about 8:15 that Television City began to stir, as people arrived to go to work on various TV shows. Studio 33, where the Skelton show is taped, was particularly busy because this was a Monday morning. On Monday the crew of the *Red Skelton Hour* frantically begins shaping the show for a live taping Tuesday night.

At 8:30, Seymour Berns, the producer, came in. Berns, a dapper man with an air of perpetual bewilderment, peered into Skelton's dressing room which was cluttered with cameras, tape recorders, Japanese artifacts, TV awards, photos of Skelton's wife and daughter, and photos of Skelton with his arm around various celebrities. Skelton, unlike some other TV comics, works very closely with his producer on every aspect of the show.

"Where's Red?" Berns asked nervously. "He's down in a rehearsal room, composing," said Willie Dahl, the show's stage manager, who began with Skelton as a page boy nearly 20 years ago. "Then he'll be on time, as usual," said Berns.

"It didn't *use* to be like that," said a bystander, who had worked with Skelton when he was on NBC in the early 1950's. "We did the show live on Sundays, and we'd never know when Red would show up or *how*. Red was pretty big with the booze in those days. Marty Rackin, the movie producer, was Red's writer and director then, and sometimes he had to haul him to the studio in an ambulance or even a hearse, with a tank of oxygen to bring him around. Marty would have to steam him out in the gym on Sunday morning, and then when he got him to the studio we had to keep buckets and ice water and wet towels all over the place. We also had a doctor who used to give him shots. Red was a pretty good pro, though. Somehow we always managed to get the program on the air."

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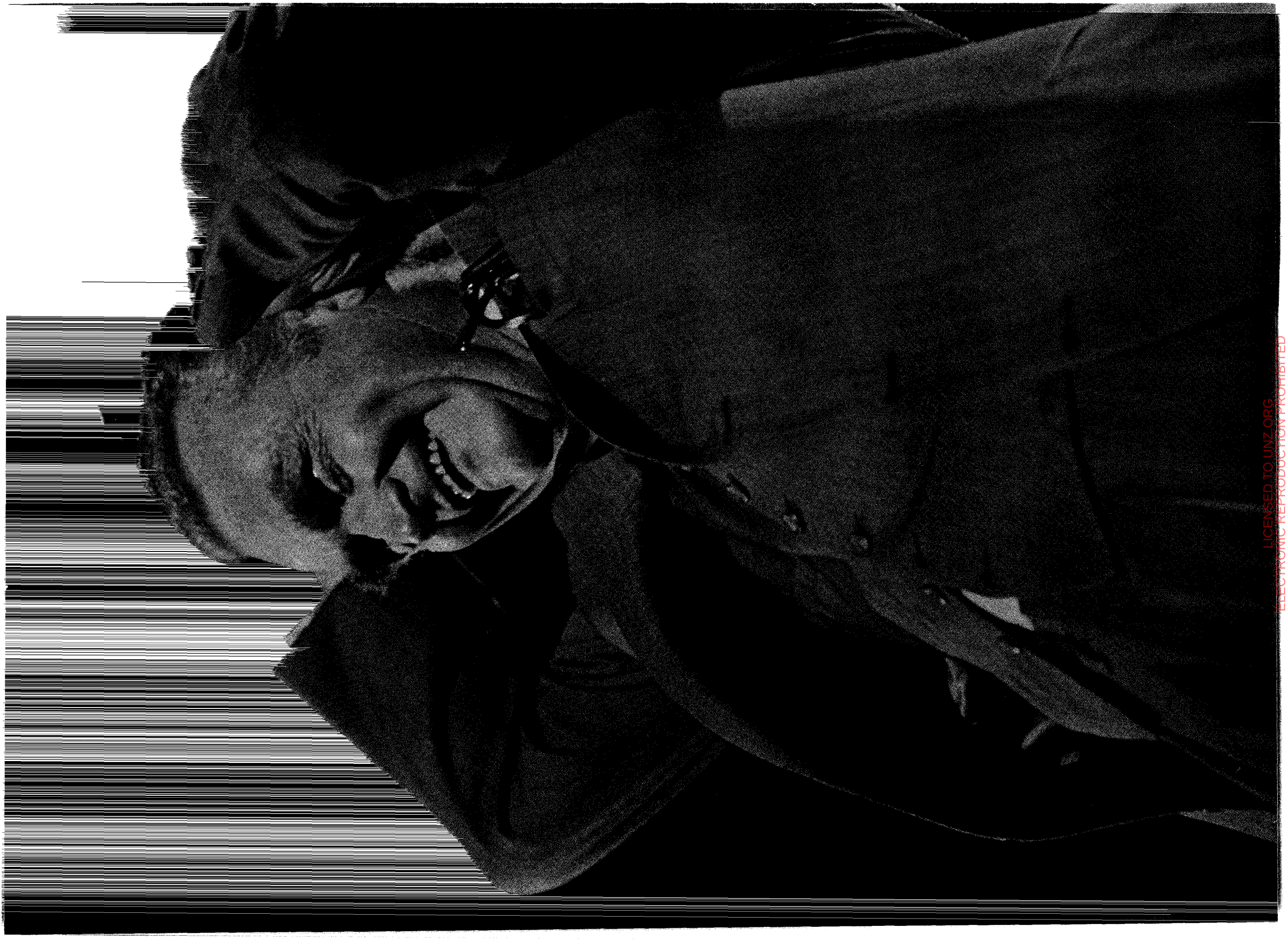

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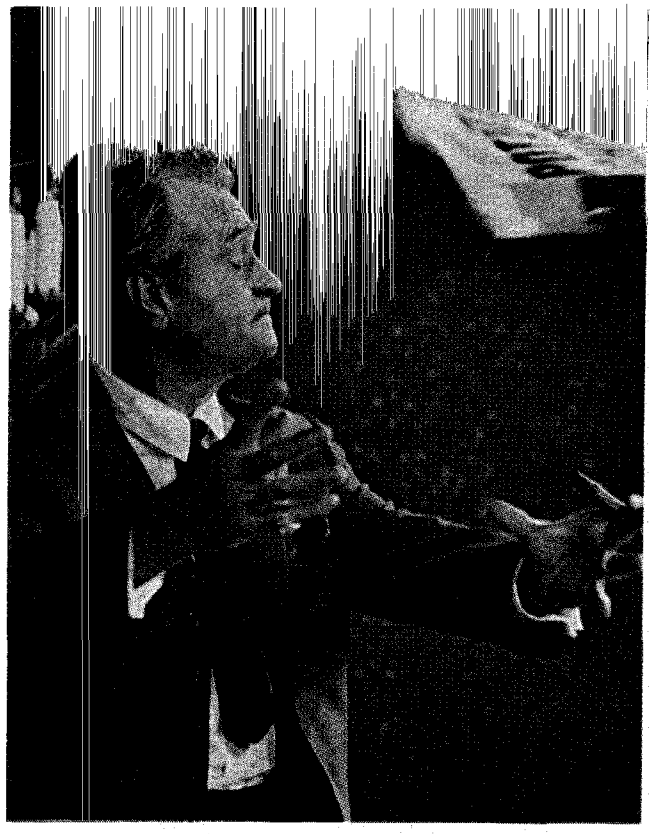
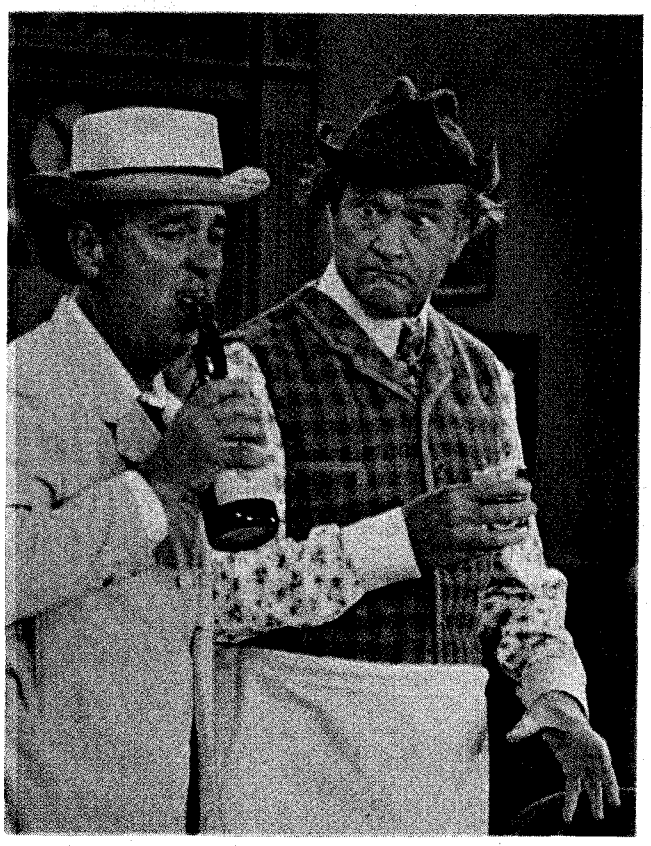
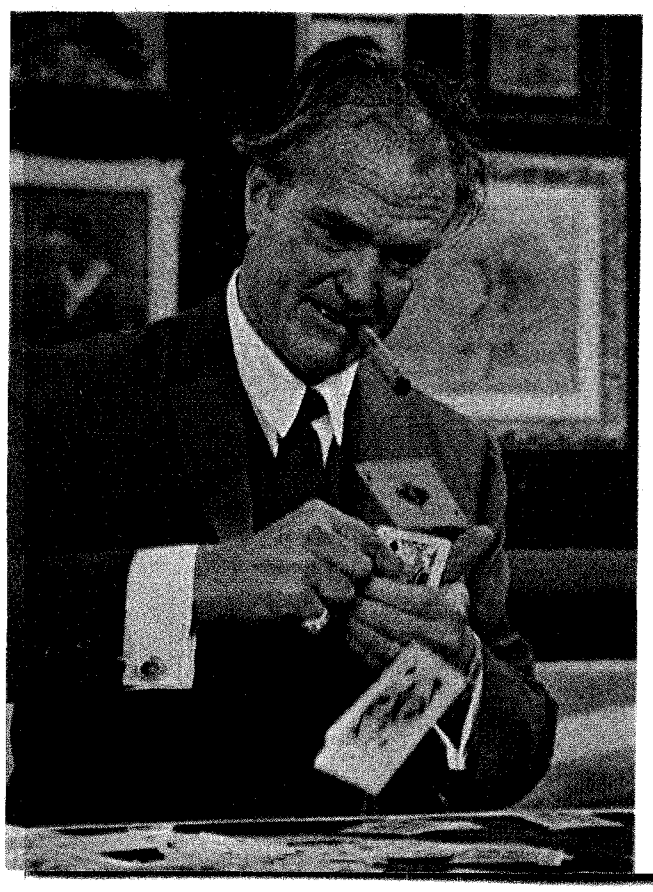






'I've seen Red throw up before a show because he was afraid he was going to flop—but I've never seen him drunk.'

Someone said, "Red was something else again in those days, when he was on the sauce. He once lived in the penthouse of an apartment building he owned, and one night when he was stoned he was showing stag movies. He turned the projector around and flashed the movies on the wall of an apartment building next door so everyone coming up Wilshire Boulevard could see them. Marty Rackin had to burn the film before the cops got there. Then there was the time he bought a mansion in Bel Air, and until he sobered up he spent the whole first week sleeping in a tree outside.

"Another time," the man went on, "he offered to take Helen Traubel's opera gowns home for her, and instead he auctioned them off on TV on a telethon. He said things on the air like, 'How about the size of *this* broad,' and 'Omar the Tentmaker must've made *this* dress.' Once he was in the White House with President Roosevelt for a March of Dimes affair. The President reached for an old-fashioned, Red reached for the same glass, and all the nervous Secret Service men reached for Red. He told the President, 'Better not drink that. I've been rolled in a place like this.'"

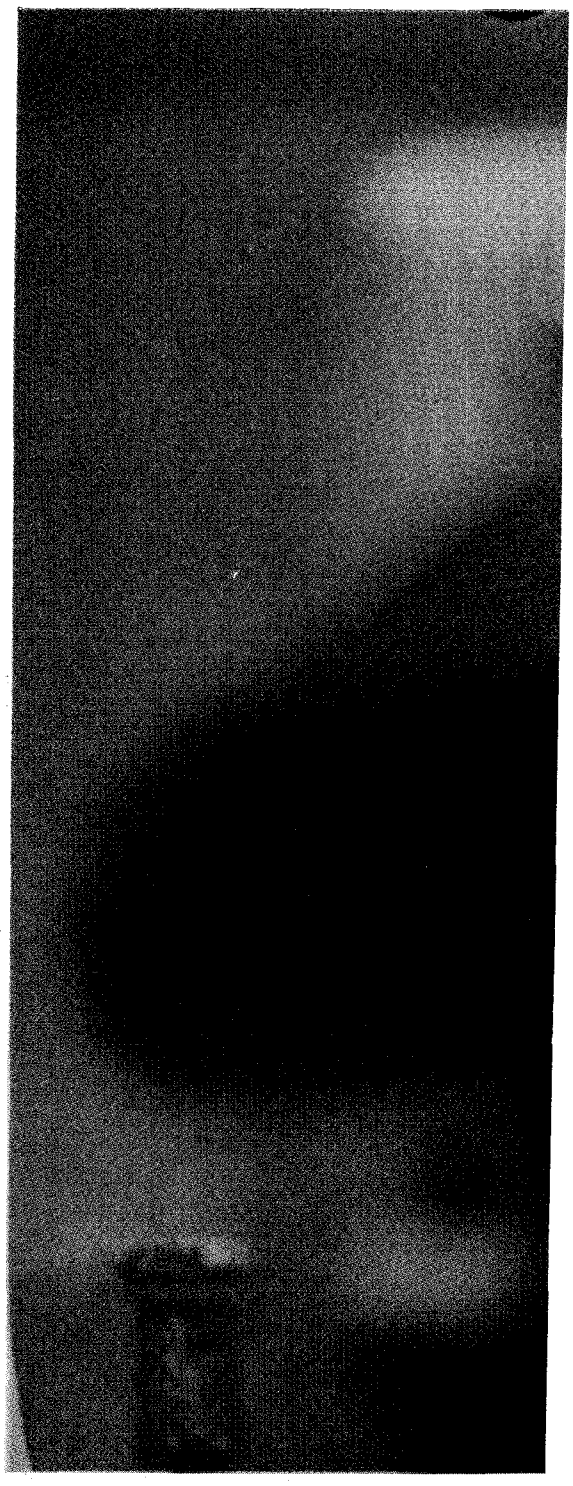
Another bystander said, "I've seen Red throw up before a show because he was afraid he was going to flop—but I've never seen him drunk. When did he go off the sauce?"

Skelton stopped drinking, another man said, "just after his boy, Richard, died of leukemia in 1958. Joe Ross, his lawyer, who handles all Red's affairs, says that he made himself a promise that he'd never touch a drop again, and he stuck to it. Joe says he breaks out in an asthma attack if he even *thinks* about taking a drink."

At 8:45 Skelton walked out on the stage, ready to work. With his shinning red hair, his slouching six-foot-three-inch frame in the old-fashioned suit, his benign-looking face with the huge unlighted cigar stuck into it, he looked like a Midwestern Rotarian arriving for a tri-state convention. He shook hands with the cast and several members of the crew and walked over to his guest star, Richard Chamberlain (the ex-Dr. Kildare), who seemed flushed and rattled by the rapid-fire stream of raucous jokes. "I hope you won't be embarrassed by working with me here on this show," Skelton said. Chamberlain muttered something about oh, no, it was an honor to work with one of the world's great comedians.

The cast began to read through the script. They concentrated on a three-act sketch in which Skelton, as San Fernando Red (a bumptious character who is a combination of Senator Claghorn and W. C. Fields), gets into trouble as an income-tax evader and is defended by Chamberlain, who has just graduated from law school. At one point, Chamberlain read the line, "I'm a neophyte," and Skelton ad-libbed, "I understand you fellows are allowed to eat meat on Friday now." The director, Bill Hobin, said, "That's good. We'll keep it in the script," and Skelton looked pleased. A dozen other Skelton ad libs were added to the script before the reading was over, and the company was dismissed until the next rehearsal at 12:15.

Skelton went back to his dressing room alone. Unlike most big stars, Skelton has no entourage, not even a valet or a "gopher" (a lackey to whom the star keeps saying, "Go for a cup of coffee," "Go for an aspirin," etc.). He removed his coat, vest and shirt, stretched out on his 10-foot couch, reached behind him for an oversized loose-leaf notebook and began writing. Although his dressing-room door remained open, no one disturbed him. "He's probably composing a short story," whispered Guy della Cioppa, his executive producer. Skelton writes an average of four or five short stories a week, but no one ever sees them except his wife Georgia. When he has finished 20 or 30 short stories, Skelton has them bound into a red leather volume with the words "By Red Skelton" stamped in gold on the cover. He



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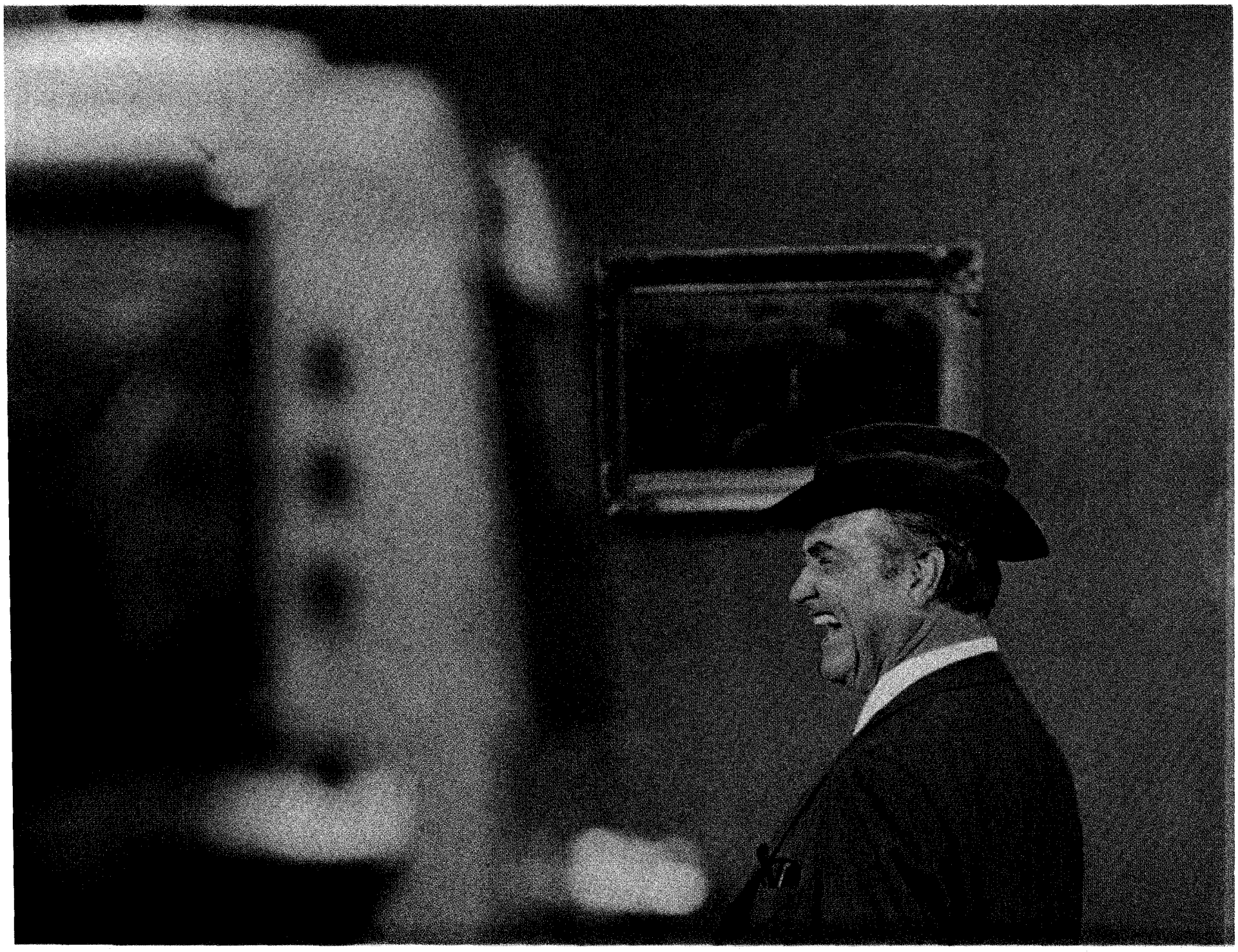

as nearly 100 such volumes hidden away at his ome in Palm Springs. He has always feared that ome mysterious group of predators, whom he efers to as "they," are out to separate him from is possessions, so the volumes remain unread, npublished and under lock and key. He once told ella Cioppa he doesn't want the stories looked at ntil after his death. "Then," he said, "someone ight have the excitement of discovery."

While Skelton scribbled away in his dressing oom, there was a general discussion in Studio 33 bout Red's obsession about "they." One of his ssociates said, "He's not as bad as he used to be, lthough just last year he told a reporter—who rinted it—'I'm nuts and I know it, but as long s I make them laugh they ain't going to lock me p.' When Red lived in Bel Air, he was so afraid f intruders that he kept every light on from sun-t to sunrise, and he had all kinds of electronic evices on the gates and fences. He even used to e deathly afraid of talking on the telephone, and e still won't do it unless it's someone he knows nd trusts on the other end of the line. Ever since ve been with him, he's kept loaded guns around, fight off intruders, I guess. I warned him there would be an accident some day, and sure enough, last summer there *was*."

At 12:15 A.M. last July 19, while Skelton was performing in the Copa Room of the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, his wife Georgia, in the Skelton suite upstairs, reached across a nightstand in the bedroom and somehow a loaded .38-caliber revolver went off. The bullet plowed through her breast and creased her rib cage. The wound was not serious, and after she left the hospital 10 days later, sheriff's deputies closed the case as an accidental shooting.

A writer who used to work for Skelton said, "I think Red's so afraid of intruders and such because he's so insecure about his own talent. He's a simple, uneducated man, and he doesn't know where his talent comes from, or even whether it will still be with him the next time he steps up on a stage to perform. If he fears that *this* can be taken away from him so easily, I guess he thinks his worldly possessions are even more vulnerable."

Another man, also an ex-Skelton writer, said, "I can understand Red's worries about money and jewels and such. He's such a good-hearted guy that a lot of people have taken advantage of him. I remember one of his business advisers, who was double-dealing him by working for the network at the same time. He's so suspicious of banks and business dealings that he still carries about five thousand dollars in cash with him all the time. He calls this his 'getaway money.' But the getaway money makes him the easiest touch in the world for anybody who comes to him with a hard-luck story. Just last week I saw him take out his wad, peel off a thousand-dollar bill and give it to a guy who claimed he had just had an operation and was broke. He's been had by a lot of people, and he keeps getting hurt when he finds out."

The man continued: "What I *don't* understand is why he focuses this suspicion on his writers. He's got eight top men grinding out his material for him. He can't do his show without them, and yet he acts as if they were picking his pocket. He even tries to pretend to himself that they're not there, and that he doesn't need them. He hardly ever talks to them and deals with them through an intermediary, Seymour Berns. Once he went on the *Jack Paar Show* and said that all his jokes were put into his head by the voice of God. When the writers protested, he answered that

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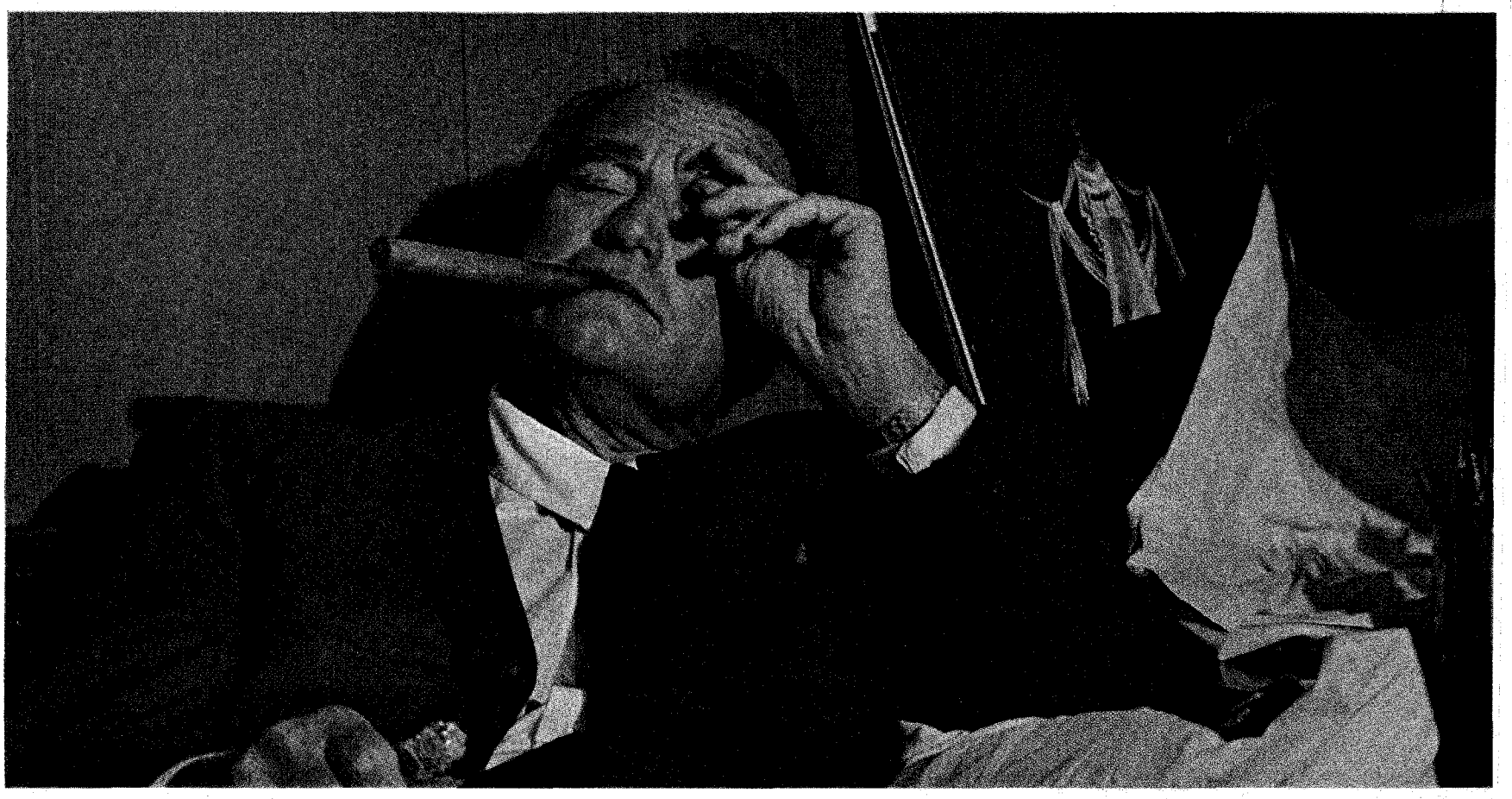
'That's what he lives for every week—forty-five minutes of love from a live audience. . .'



they were just complaining because he had given God top billing."

By now it was 12:15, and the second rehearsal of the day was about to begin. Skelton ambled out on the stage, smacking his lips and scratching his sides like a man who had just enjoyed a deep, satisfying sleep. He looked anything but insecure. He wandered down to the front of the stage while the cast and crew scurried about getting ready for the rehearsal, and he noted that the seats in the studio were well-filled with CBS secretaries on their lunch hour. "Ah," he said, "my family." One girl tripped coming down the aisle, and he said, "Don't say anything until you see your lawyer." He sat down on the apron of the stage and told the secretaries in the first few rows a dirty story about a woman who took 18 hormone pills a day. He then saw a nun in the audience, and he said to the secretaries, "I'm sorry, girls, but we're going to have to have a clean rehearsal today." The girls groaned.

The rehearsal, which revolved around the Clem Kadiddlehopper character, was a shambles. Props didn't work. Actors stumbled about, knowing neither their lines nor their moves. Some of the scenery was still unfinished. Hobin, the director, swore. "Who would believe," he muttered, "that we're going to tape this thing tomorrow night?" The only one unconcerned and totally at ease was Skelton. With his remarkably mobile face, he skipped about the stage, ad-libbing. Now you can see the man's *real* genius," whispered head writer Bob Schiller. "This man's the greatest pantomimist in the world. I know it's not chic among the intellectuals to like Skelton, but the intellectuals' darling, Chaplin, couldn't *do* this day in and day out, not in a million years. Chaplin would have to think about a move for weeks before he'd add it to a routine. With Skelton, you just give him a hook and he takes off with his improvisations, like a jazz musician. It gives the people watching him the feeling that it's happening right there. He's the guy who comes to your house and is the life of the party by putting the lampshade on his head."

On the stage Skelton continued to be the life of his personal party, neglecting the problems of the rest of the cast and the technicians. Restraining his ribaldry in deference to the nun in the audience, he nevertheless flung himself around the stage like an athlete half his age (54). When it was over, Skelton came happily down to his favorite seat on the apron of the stage and beamed. "It feels fine," he said. "It's a shame we can't tape it now."

While Hobin and Berns puzzled over the script and production problems, Skelton sat and reminisced about his early years. "Back in Vincennes, Indiana," he said, "my mother was so poor that she used to get all her furniture from the Salvation Army, so if we had to move out fast without paying the rent, she didn't mind leaving it behind." Skelton's mother, who died recently, was a charwoman when he was a boy. His father is supposed to have died before Red was born. At various times Skelton has described his father as a great clown with the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. On other occasions he has said he was a professor of English at Indiana University. Producer Marty Rackin, who first got to know Skelton when both were in their teens and working in vaudeville, says, "I'm not sure he knows *anything* about his father. I'm not even sure his name is Richard Bernard Skelton. I know he pulled that middle name, Bernard, out of thin air one day." Skelton's current executive producer, Guy della Cioppa, is equally uncertain about Skelton's heritage. He says, "When we formed our production company, Red said we should call it Van Bernard Productions, and that's the name today. I don't know where the 'Van' came from, and I'm positive Bernard isn't his middle name. But he always thinks of himself as two people. The offstage Skelton is Red. The fellow who performs *on*stage he always refers to in the third person as 'Victor Van Bernard.'"

Sitting on the apron, a fresh unlighted cigar in his mouth, Skelton said, "I got my first job at the age of ten workin' for a feller who ran a medicine show. I got ten dollars a week and gave my mother five. I still have one of the silver dollars from that first week's pay." *(Martin Rackin says, "Red's made up so many stories about his background that it's hard to tell what's true and what isn't. The medicine-show bit* might *have happened, but I'm sure he never worked as a clown in the circus or on the riverboat,* The Cotton Blossom, *like he says. What* is *true is that he spent a lot of time learning his trade in burlesque and in vaudeville.* That's *where his fantastic photographic mind soaked up every joke and every comic routine that was ever devised.")*

Still holding forth in Studio 33, Skelton said "The greatest actor I ever seen was a feller who did little dramas in vaudeville, name of Leonard Swore. One night he was supposed to shoot himself in a skit, but the propman forgot to put the gun on the stage. Without batting an eye, he said 'Ah, the poison ring,' and he rubbed his ring across his face and fell down." *(Rackin says, "Red got to be a big vaudeville headliner because he learned from everything he saw. Once he watched a guy in a diner dunking doughnuts, and that got to be one of his most famous routines. He has an almost child like capacity for imitation, and he's never been anything but the childlike country boy. Even when M-G-M signed him in 1940, and he lived in a magnificent mansion in Hollywood, he sat around in his undershirt and suspenders eating pork chops for breakfast under a ten-thousand-dollar crystal chandelier. The city slickers always took advantage of this childlike country boy, and that's how he first got on the booze. When Red and I were kids together in*

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vaudeville, he drank nothing but ice-cream sodas. Then one night a wise guy in the Glen Gray orchestra substituted some gin for the water in a glass he used for a guzzler routine he did onstage—and he was off.")

Skelton was still reminiscing when director Hobin dismissed the company until the next rehearsal at 3:15. The star climbed to his feet and limped off to his dressing room. Noticing the limp, Seymour Berns said, "One of the stunt men came down on Red's instep with his full weight a couple of weeks ago. He throws himself into this thing with such wild abandon that he's always getting hurt. A few shows ago he ducked into the swing of an actress who was supposed to be belting him, and he developed a shiner right in the middle of the taping. The worst was in 1954 when he crashed into a wall that was supposed to break away but didn't. He had what we later learned was a concussion, but he went through the rest of the show on instinct, like a boxer who's caught one right on the jaw. Also, he's *still* got a bad back from that one." Berns crossed his fingers. "Let's hope we don't have another one like that, or none of us eat."

The studio emptied, but in about half an hour the seats began to fill up again. By the time the cast and crew returned for the 3:15 run-through, nearly all of the 200-odd places in the audience section of the huge room had filled up. Stage manager Willie Dahl said that the people were from all over CBS, and that they assembled here regularly every Monday and Tuesday afternoon because "the three-fifteen rehearsal is the Red Skelton Dirty Hour." Dahl said, "We call it 'the blue rehearsal,' and it's when Red ad-libs all the stuff he knows from burlesque. In the days of *Playhouse 90* they used to schedule their rehearsals so their whole cast and crew could come to our 'blue rehearsal' and unwind."

By now David Rose and his orchestra were in place, and the rehearsal proceeded with music for the first time. Skelton tripped onstage and did bumps and grinds to the music. He seemed aglow with anticipation. After he did his regularly scheduled pantomime about two hens in an egg-laying contest, he added another about a jealous rooster who sees brightly painted Easter eggs in his hen house and then goes out and shoots a passing peacock. The performance was brilliant, a classic of old-time burlesque, and the audience roared with delight. Skelton beamed. At the end he ran through his regular show-closing speech in which he always expresses his fervent hope that he didn't offend anyone and extends a benediction by saying, "God bless."

At 6 P.M. on that Monday there was a dress rehearsal, and the studio theater filled up with tourists who came clutching tickets, just as if it were a regular show. For Skelton, it *was* a regular show. As he dressed in his tuxedo for his opening monologue, he was pensive and jittery. All the carefree buffoonery of the afternoon was gone. He jigged nervously in the wings to the music of the overture as he waited to be introduced. When he finally ran out onto the stage, he was taut and self-conscious, but as the roar of the audience welled up, an instantaneous transformation took place.

The applause seemed to infuse his entire body. He did an extra 20 minutes of monologue for the studio audience. The audience didn't know it, but it was the same routine, more or less, which he has done for 20 years as a warm-up. It consisted of mildly risqué jokes, such as "I was a real dickens the way I used to chase girls when I was young. Now I *still* chase girls, but I've forgotten why." Skelton looked at the audience with a naughty-little-boy look on his face. "Better laugh *now*," he said. "You won't hear *these* jokes on television."

Afterward, Skelton drove alone to his mansion in Bel Air, about six miles away from CBS. He dictated endless memos into one of his 31 tape recorders. They would be typed up by his secretary, Mary Okie, in the morning. As usual, he was edgy in the sprawling 27-room mansion. It's empty now except for a housekeeper and his 20-year-old daughter, Valentina, a tall freckled redhead who lives there during the week while she goes to Santa Monica City College. Skelton himself only sleeps there two nights a week while he is rehearsing and taping his show. The rest of the time he lives with his wife in Palm Springs, 100 miles away. Skelton was never very happy in the Bel Air house, and his associates wonder why he keeps it. (It was here that their son contracted the fatal leukemia from which he died at the age of nine. For four years after Richard died, Skelton kept the boy's room exactly as he had left it, with his toys scattered around. He used to go into the room and sit there alone for hours at a time.)

The first Tuesday rehearsal didn't begin until 9:45. As he had on the previous day, Skelton passed the time composing music. He tapes the tunes he picks out on the piano and then gives the tapes to Tom Ferris, a pianist who has been with him for 23 years. Ferris hunts through the tapes and orchestrates the best parts into background music for the TV show or into a number for a Skelton record album, two of which have been released, with indifferent success. Skelton, to protect his musical creations, has copyrighted 840 songs and 36 symphonies.

As he waited in Studio 33 for Skelton to finish his composing, Guy della Cioppa said, "Red's a turmoil of talent—trying to express himself in a hundred ways. He not only writes music, short stories and poetry, but he paints. He does three or four oil paintings a week. He used to do only clowns, and they were all redheaded. But now he's also doing still lifes and abstractions. Lately he's been hipped on medieval Japanese art, and he's painting one Samurai warrior after another."

Someone added, "A lot of his work is corny, but at least this *creative* turmoil has replaced the *destructive* turmoil that used to dominate his life. When he was married to Edna, and even in his first few years with Georgia, he was a wild man." Skelton's first wife was Edna Marie Stillwell, a theater cashier whom Red met and married when he was a master of ceremonies for walkathons during the Depression. Edna managed all his business affairs, as if he were a child, and he always referred to her as "Mummy." As Skelton's career progressed from vaudeville to radio to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where he made more than 30 films, Edna was able to stabilize his economic affairs but not his emotional state. The marriage fell apart during World War II. Skelton went into the Army as a private, spent all his time entertaining troops bound for Italy and was discharged as a private. Edna had gotten her divorce two years earlier and Skelton married Georgia Maureen Davis, a tall, redheaded Hollywood bit player, while on furlough in 1945. Strangely, however, Edna remained in the picture for several years as Skelton's business manager, and she and Georgia became quite good friends. The strange trio of Skelton, Edna and Georgia used to astound Hollywood by frequently having a quiet dinner together in public.

The joint Edna-Georgia regency coincided with the period in which Skelton did some of his most spectacular carousing. He began his television career on NBC in 1951, but within two

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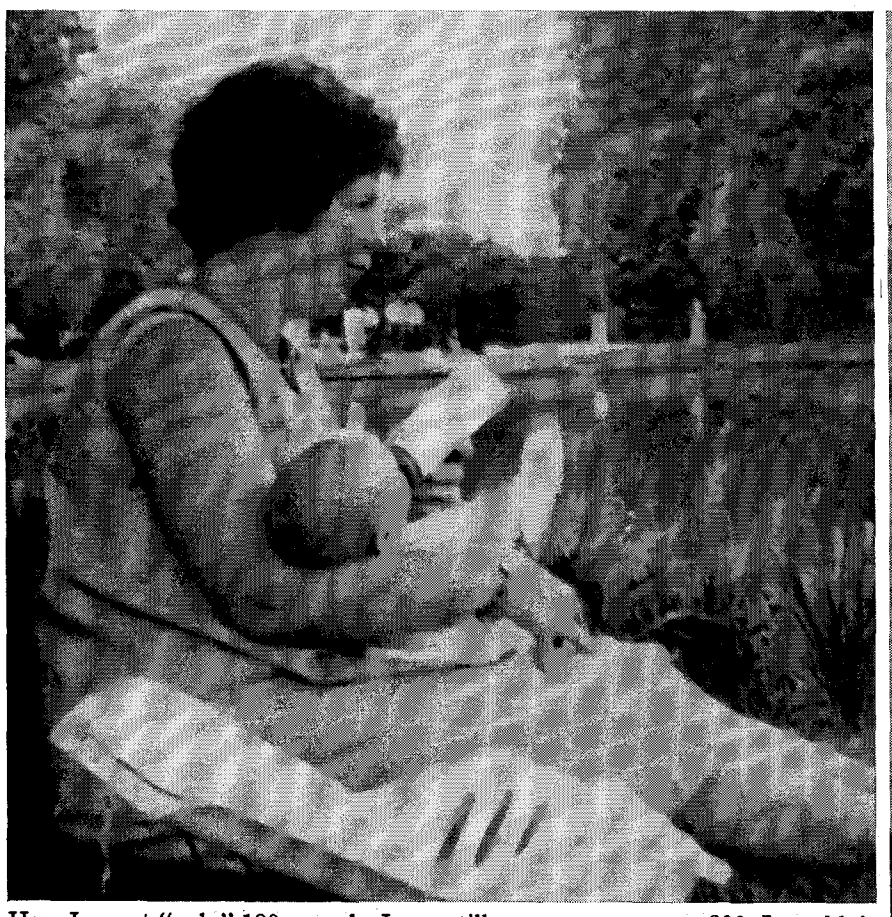

Here I am at "only" 180 pounds. I was still on my way up—to 200. I wouldn't let anybody take my picture when I was that fat! I was too ashamed.

Now look at me. At 140 pounds with a new wardrobe to show off my new figure, I'm proud to say I'm Elizabeth Rhoads of Hightstown, New Jersey.

I gave up diet pills and lost 60 pounds.

By Elizabeth Rhoads—as told to Ruth L. McCarthy

MY husband and I had been on a slim budget for years, but I kept getting fatter. And fatter. Not that this was anything new for me. I'd een "nice and solid" all my life. But 200 pounds at 5 years of age is enough to scare anybody.

My weight problem began with peanut butter and elly sandwiches and sweets whenever I could get hem. In seventh grade, I weighed 145 pounds. By he time I was in college, I had hit 165. What a hock that was to my husband. Only he wasn't yet ıy husband.

Dusty and I were going steady at the time. And I olunteered for a summer job with the American 'riends Service Committee. He kissed me good-bye nd I headed for Cherokee, North Carolina. There, group of us dug ditches and helped lay pipelines to rovide water supplies for the Cherokee Indians. 'ou'd think with all that hard work, I'd have lost eight. But it only made my appetite heartier. All ay I ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. In the vening, it was macaroni and cheese or spaghetti. eal blimp food. And did it show!

Fortunately for me, Dusty saw beyond my measrements. He asked me to marry him anyway. 'hen we set the date, I went on the crash diet of my fe. Cottage cheese and buttermilk—until I dropped › 135 pounds.

At least, I was a slim bride. But the honeymoon was ›on over, and on went the pounds again. Two pregıncies added more weight. About 20 pounds each me. Permanent pounds.

By this time, my husband was in graduate school. here was little money for fun and there was no time r it if we had it. Babies, housework and books—ıat was my life. Eating was my only diversion. I ied to cover up its effect with full skirts and overblouses. But 180 pounds is hard to hide, believe me.

Finally, in desperation, I went to a doctor. He prescribed reducing pills. Four weeks were all I could take of them, they made me so nervous. And they were all our budget could stand. I gave them up for good.

Then my mother began a succession of bribes. I had been invited to the wedding of my best girl friend. A new dress, my mother said, if I'd lose weight. I didn't—so I went in a dress that was much too tight. When I took off my coat, the skirt had worked itself up to my waist. It was so embarrassing, I wanted to cry. But instead I ate.

Next, my mother said she'd give me one hundred dollars if I'd lose 25 pounds. I took off 24½ and couldn't shed the last half-pound. Back up the scales I went. Even my feet gained weight! I went from a 7½B to an 8C shoe. I was 200 pounds. Just in time for my husband's graduation.

What was I to wear? Again my mother offered to buy me a dress. This time with no strings attached. But we couldn't find one. I finally bought the largest pattern I could get—added to it—and made myself a shift. I went to commencement exercises with a new outfit and a time-worn resolution: "I've got to reduce!" But how?

Then came the luckiest day of my life. I read Edith Henderson's story of how she'd lost 97 pounds with the help of Ayds—a vitamin and mineral reducing plan candy that contained no harmful drugs. Could they really help me?

I bought both the vanilla-caramel kind and the chocolate fudge-type. I took them before each meal as directed. And I took them one other way, too—between meals. That, I think, has been the greatest help of all to me in reducing. Because my greatest problem has always been between-meal nibbling.

On the Ayds Plan, my weight began to come down. Slowly but surely. Whenever I felt the compulsion to eat between meals, I'd just take an Ayds. When we were traveling with the children, I'd take them with me. Then, when we'd stop for hamburgers, my husband would add a milkshake and French fries to his order and I'd subtract them, because of Ayds. They've been terrific for me in that respect. In fact, in all respects. I think Ayds have actually helped me retrain my appetite. I had proof of that not very long ago. We went to a Chinese restaurant for a sort of celebration. And you know how light Chinese food can be. Well, I couldn't even finish my dinner. And that's something for me.

Oh, one last thing. See this bracelet I'm wearing? It's a present from my husband and a record of my weight loss. Each one of these semi-precious stones represents a five-pound loss. As I get lighter, it gets heavier. It's not a terribly expensive bracelet, but it's very precious to me. Right now, you see, it's worth 60 pounds—thanks to Ayds.

BEFORE AND AFTER MEASUREMENTS

Before		After
5′6½″	Height	5′6½″
200 pounds	Weight	140 pounds
43″	Bust	37½″
36″	Waist	27½″
47¼″	Hips	38½″
22½	Dress	12

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years he not only was about to be dropped by NBC but also by M-G-M. Skelton and Georgia separated in 1952. He was reported in the newspapers as saying, "I can't go on with this," and Georgia, in an interview, replied, "Red's a difficult person to live with." They were back together again in a few weeks.

(When Skelton seemed to be finished professionally in the summer of 1953, Rackin says, "I got him a booking at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas. But he had one of his irrational fears about going there. So I loaded his vodka with sleeping pills, and when he passed out I put him in a sleeping bag and drove him to Las Vegas in the back of a station wagon. He ended up loving Vegas, and he was a smash at the Sahara. I kept him on the straight and narrow for three weeks—just long enough for a delegation from CBS to see him in good condition. They signed him for a CBS series, and he's been on the network ever since. But as soon as the contract was signed, I *walked out on Red, after fifteen years." Rackin, who rose to be the head of movie production at Paramount Pictures, and who now is a top independent producer, has said only casual hellos to Skelton since the day he left him in Las Vegas in 1953.)*

In Studio 33 the 9:45 Tuesday rehearsal was about to begin, and Skelton strode onstage, this time in an old-fashioned blue suit with a gray tie and a bright red vest. On the surface he seemed to be his irreverently cheerful self, but something was bothering him. About halfway through "the Silent Spot," which was about a man who eats a nauseating potpourri of food before going to bed and then has a nightmare, Skelton stopped and came forward, to the stage apron. "Do you realize this is a dream sequence?" he asked a CBS secretary sitting in the audience. The startled girl said, "No," and Skelton yelled up to director Hobin in the control booth, "You see, *that's* what's wrong." Hobin and Berns scrambled down to the stage to confer with him.

"He gets his opinions about the show from secretaries, elevator men, gas-station attendants and even golfers," Willie Dahl said. "He doesn't play golf himself, but his Palm Springs house is right on the seventeenth tee of the Tamarisk Country Club. Red lies in wait behind his back fence, and when the golfers go past, he pops up and asks them how they liked the show. He could be Number One in the Nielsen Ratings, as he is this week, but he's not happy unless the golfers think the show's good too."

The conference about the dream sequence broke up when Skelton insisted it be labeled as such. He suggested doing this with a camera close-up of a book about how to avoid nightmares. He said, "Comedy is fantasy to begin with, so when you put in a dream, it's a dream within a dream, and the audience gets confused. We had the same problem with a dream sequence at M-G-M when we made the movie *DuBarry Was a Lady*." The mild resistance of Hobin and Berns collapsed, and the nightmare book was added to the prop list of the show.

The rest of the morning rehearsal continued without incident, and the cast was dismissed until the next run-through at 12:30. The company already had done five complete rehearsals in a little more than 24 hours, and everyone except Skelton looked tired. Berns rubbed his eyes and said, "This show is a physical impossibility, like the bumblebee which shouldn't be able to fly but it does. We do this whole thing in two days; other shows rehearse for nearly a week before they tape."

Asked *why* he had to adhere to the two-day schedule, Berns said that it was a successful formula worked out by the late Cecil Barker (his predecessor as Skelton's producer), and that the short schedule actually was spelled out in Skelton's CBS contract. Berns said, "Barker's theory was that Red burns up so much energy that if we kept him around here for a week, he'd collapse before we were ready to tape. The two-day schedule seems to be just right. We tape on Tuesday night, and on Wednesday Red *does* collapse—but it's in Palm Springs and on his own time."

There were two comedy writers in the now-emptied studio, and one of them said, "All comics have this fantastic childlike energy. With Ed Gardner, we used to have to go up to his house at night and drive a stake through his heart before he'd go to sleep."

The other writer said, "Red was like that, too, but it was tougher for him because he's always been a loner. Instead of channeling his energy into camaraderie with a lot of guys, like most of the other comics do, he'd go off on his bashes and fight with Georgia. His show went right up to the top and stayed there after he moved to CBS in 1953, and he should have been the happiest guy in the world, but he was miserable."

From 1953 to 1961, the undisciplined turmoil in Skelton's life continued. A few leavening influences began to have their effect, however. The first was his friendship with Gene Fowler, the writer. Fowler sought out Skelton because of his admiration for Skelton's genius, and up until the time he died in 1960, he planned to be the comedian's biographer. Instead, he became a carousing companion for Skelton, but he inadvertently left his mark on him. The uneducated Skelton came to admire erudition for the first time in his life. Always seeking the father he never had, Skelton, by his own admission, looked on Fowler as such. To emulate his "father," Skelton began to read. He started with *The Book of Knowledge*, the child's encyclopedia, and worked his way up to history and biography. Today, Skelton is making a special study of the Napoleonic period and is writing a novel about Napoleon.

The second leavening factor on Skelton's life in the 1950's was the illness and death of his son Richard. The tragedy had a profoundly sobering effect on both Red and his wife Georgia. Willie Dahl says, "I never saw a man go through such agony. He used to stare into space during rehearsals and say, 'What the hell am I doing here?' When he saw a kid Richard's age in the audience, he'd break up."

The Tuesday 12:30 rehearsal, the sixth one for this show, started routinely enough. The cast and crew were operating fairly smoothly by now, and director Hobin was concentrating on his camera angles and music cues. But about halfway through "the Silent Spot," something went wrong.

Just before the start of the dream sequence, Skelton was supposed to get into a bed and crawl under the covers. A device was rigged up so that he could slip out of the bed, unnoticed by the audience, while a stand-in replaced him under the blankets. The effect was that Skelton was in bed dreaming and acting out his dreams on the stage at the same time. The device which removed him from the bed was a sort of litter on wheels. After he lowered himself onto it from the bed, crewmen pulled him backstage through an unseen opening in the wall behind the bed.

The device had worked perfectly in previous rehearsals, but this time as Skelton dropped from the bed, the device moved and Skelton fell heavily to the floor. The plank edge of the litter caught him in the back as he fell. The blow had the effect of a kidney punch, and Skelton lay semiconscious on the floor. The backstage crew went into panic. Someone told a cameraman, who used his headset microphone to inform Berns and Hobin in the control booth. The two executives rushed backstage and called a CBS nurse. By the time the nurse arrived, Skelton was able to talk. "*The Invaders* (the show opposite him on ABC) must have sent one of their secret agents in here," he said. The nurse gave Skelton some pain-killing pills and helped him to his dressing room. "After that, *I* need a sedative," the producer said.

The rehearsal continued with another actor, Bob Shannon, reading Skelton's lines. But by the time the rehearsal was winding up, Skelton was back at his favorite spot, sitting on the apron of the stage. Asked how his back felt, he said, "I'm so hopped up with the excitement of getting ready for tonight's taping that I hardly feel it. But wait until I'm a half hour out of Los Angeles, driving home to Palm Springs. Will I let out a yell of pain *then!*" He commented on the efficiency of the CBS nurse who had treated him. "She gave me a tetanus shot," he said, "and I got an infection from the needle." For no reason at all he then lapsed into a reminiscence about a female panhandler named Broadway Rose, who used to work the theater district in New York when he was in vaudeville. "This old ugly broad used to wait for me when I came outta the stage door," he said, "and if I didn't give her money she'd start hollering at the top of her voice, 'He's the father of my children and he won't support them.'"

Just then, Skelton's lawyer, Joe Ross, came into the studio. Ross, a suave, dignified man in his 50's who is considered to be one of the leading show-business attorneys in Hollywood, inquired whether Skelton wanted to sue himself because of the accident he had just suffered. Skelton said, "That sounds like one of my writer's lousy lines." He and Ross then consummated about a half million dollars worth of business deals, without Skelton budging from his impromptu public throne on the stage. As he signed the sheaf of documents, Skelton said, "Is it worth all this just to be happy?"

When the papers were signed, Skelton limped off to his dressing room holding his back, and Ross explained that all of Red's investments now are in prosaic but safe commodities.

"When I joined Red in 1961, I've never seen such a foul-up in my life," Ross said. "He had bought the Chaplin studio, which I called 'the Black Hole of Calcutta,' because of the way he

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Frequently (Over 65%) 6
Often (30-65%) 5
Seldom (Under 30%) 3
Never 1
How much turnpike or freeway driving do you do?
A great deal (Over 65%) 8
A lot (30-65%) 6
Not too much (Under 30%) 4
None 1
How much of your driving do you do with heavy loads (3 or more adult passengers, a full trunk or both)?
Most of it (Over 65%) 7
Much of it (30-65%) 5
Little of it (Under 30%) 4
None of it 1
How many miles do you drive in this car per year?
20,000 8
15,000 7
10,000 5
5,000 or less 3
How long do you expect to keep this car?
2 years or more 7
18 mos. 6
12 mos. 4
6 mos. or less 3
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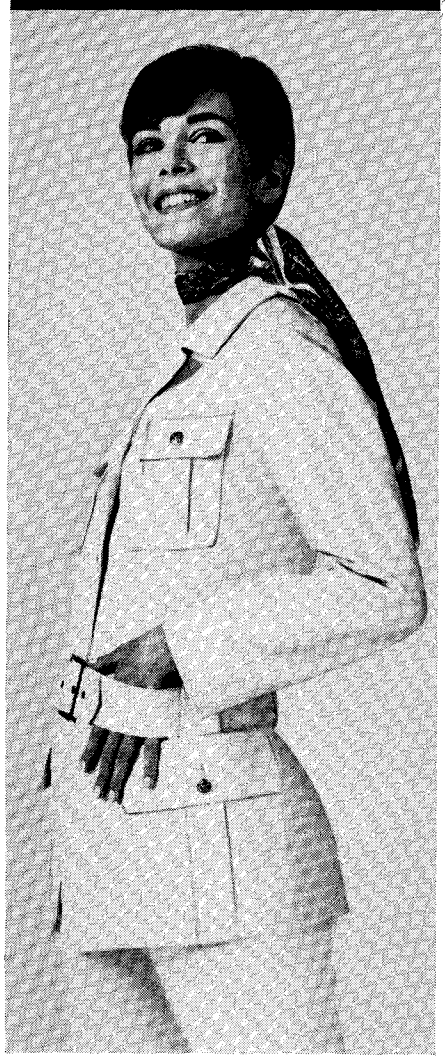

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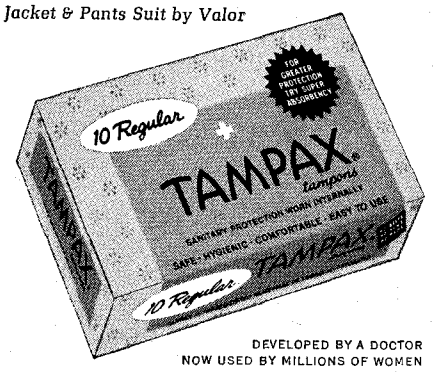

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was pouring money into it. His little whim about sitting at Chaplin's desk was costing him about ten thousand dollars a week. He couldn't get anybody else to use the place, not even for filming commercials. It was a rat's nest, and he was spending all his time worrying about repairs, paying bills and checking on things like light bulbs. He trusted nobody then—and with good reason. He had been taken, but royally. People had bought themselves ranches with his money.

"The first thing I did was to get rid of that damned studio. CBS wasn't happy with the half-hour format of Red's show then, so I went to them and said Red would sign a new contract for a one-hour show, *if* they bought the studio from him. They did, for five and a half million. As far as Red was concerned, he was in the clear financially for the first time in years."

With the fiscal worries eliminated Ross set about trying to remove some of his client's other problems. Ross said, "I told Red he *had* to get out of the Bel Air house, where he and Georgia sat brooding over Richard all the time. That led to their buying the Palm Springs house in 1962. They wouldn't give up the Bel Air house altogether, but a few weeks after they moved out into the desert, a miracle occurred. Suddenly he and Georgia were spending a lot of time together because there was nowhere else for Red to go, and they were learning to do a lot of constructive, creative things together. It was wonderful to see *two* people come out of the twilight zone, because Georgia, too, had been pretty undisciplined in the old days." (Stage manager Willie Dahl confirms that in the 20 years he's known Skelton, he's never seen such a radical change-for-the-better in him. "Three months after he moved to Palm Springs," says Dahl, "Red came back to the Bel Air house and cleared all the clothes and toys out of Richard's bedroom. From that moment on he was a different guy on the show.")

It was time for the Tuesday 3:30 rehearsal, the seventh since Monday morning, and the auditorium filled up again for the week's second presentation of the Red Skelton Dirty Hour. The star, hobbled though he was by his aching back, did not disappoint them. If anything, the ensuing ad libs and gestures were even more lascivious than they had been the day before. The show itself, however, played smoothly. After delivering his usual "God bless" closing line, he came down to the stage apron for a bit of philosophizing before retiring to his dressing room to prepare for the taping, scheduled for six P.M.

He looked over to where David Rose was still rehearsing with the orchestra. "You know the secret of this show?" said Skelton. "It's like taking a window of Tiffany's jewelry store and dressing it up with the purtiest diamonds and emeralds, and in the middle of all that beautiful stuff, you hang a salami. I'm the salami."

The salami left, and Guy della Cioppa said, "Red's beat now. He's just going on nervous energy. When he gets to Palm Springs tonight, he'll literally *need* the next five days to recover." Asked about Skelton's schedule once that evening's show was finished, della Cioppa said, "He'll be dressed in about ten minutes, get into his car and drive the hundred miles to Palm Springs. When he gets home, he'll watch the show we taped three weeks ago, and which will be on the air tonight. He has video-tape recorders at home, and Georgia will have taped it from one of their TV sets as it comes over the air from eight-thirty to nine-thirty. She also will have taped the competing shows on NBC and ABC. Red likes to watch himself and the competition at the same time."

"Tomorrow," continued della Cioppa, "is Unhappy Day for Red. He'll be exhausted, physically and emotionally. We leave him alone on Wednesday. On Thursday we send him next week's script, and if any business has to be transacted with him, Friday is the day we usually go to see him. On Sunday he comes back here to Los Angeles, and the grind starts all over again. But on Wednesday through Saturday in Palm Springs, he does his writing, composing, photography, gardening—all the activities that have replaced the destructive things in his life."

The Skelton Palm Springs house is a beautiful one-story structure, decorated in pastel desert shades, which curves around a swimming pool. On the left, as you enter, is a perfect replica of a Japanese garden. On the right is a perfect replica of a formal Italian garden. Skelton bought the statuary in Florence, and it would be a welcome addition to the collection of any museum. Skelton spends most of his time in the Japanese side of the house. He has a teahouse there in which he ruminates and creates. Lately the Japanese garden itself seems to take most of Skelton's creative time. He combs sand for hours until he attains the correct degree of fineness. He painstakingly cuts tiny pieces of bonsai trees to train them into the proper distorted shapes. He works with local pines, manipulating them so that they look Oriental. He rides around in a little red tractor in which he hauls trees, dirt and stones.

It was five minutes to six on Tuesday. The audience was in place, and Studio 33 had acquired the air of precurtain tension in a Broadway theater. In the wings Skelton once again was jigging nervously to the music. A $300-a-week makeup man wiped the sweat from his glistening face. Then came the cue and he was onstage.

In a split second the weariness and the pain were gone. The improvisations still looked like improvisations, but he didn't miss a single one of the ad libs he had devised and perfected over the preceding two days. In addition, there were *new* improvisations he hadn't even tried before, such as when he flipped a pickle expertly into the pre-nightmare mixing bowl in "the Silent Spot."

When it was over and he delivered his "God bless" benediction, there were tears in his eyes while the studio audience clapped and whistled. His hands shook, and his face shone with perspiration. One of Skelton's associates said, "That's what he lives for every week—forty-five minutes of love from a live audience. He's happy as a recluse in Palm Springs, but without coming in for his ration of love every Tuesday, I think he would die. This is his plasma. The core of all his problems is that he never knows when he'll come in some week and suddenly there'll be no more love, no more plasma." ⊏

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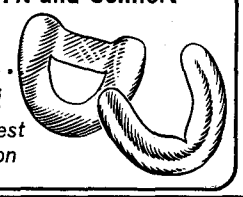

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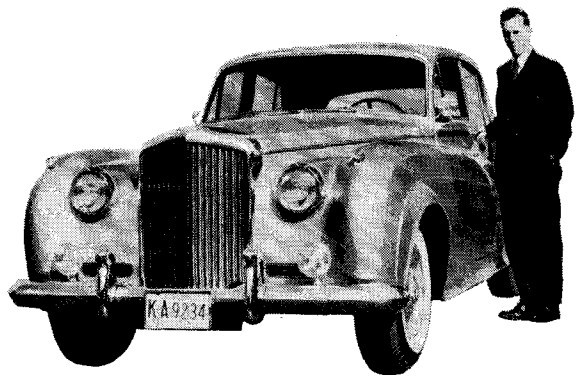

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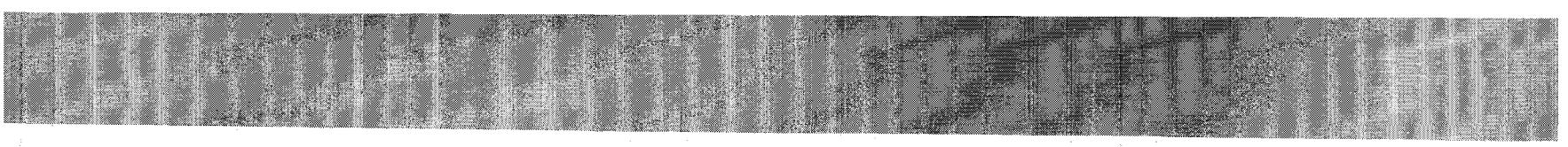

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THE FIRST 124 YEARS ARE THE HARDEST

The 'oldest living American' gives us his own personal version of the old days, including a put-down of President Lincoln, a behind-the-scenes look at slavery, and the 'real' cause of the Civil War.

By LIN ROOT and AGNES ASH

When the Social Security Act was amended in 1954 to include agricultural workers, Charlie Smith was orking as a fruit picker in Winter aven, Fla. Going to collect his payeck, Charlie was asked for his Social curity number. Charlie had never ard of Social Security, so someone ed out the form for him. The girl who ened the application at the Lakeland ice took it over to district manager lliam Arnold. "Look at this," she d. "Born 1842. It must be 1942." A mber was issued, but an investigator s sent to see Charlie.

High up a 20-foot ladder, in a citrus ve, dropping oranges into the enorus sack slung from a strap around his k, was a man with incredible age inibed in his face. His skin, which lay se on his bones without wrinkles or ging jowls, looked spongy and poIs. A couple of white hairs near the dge of his nose were all he had for brows. His eyelids hooded his deep- eyes in sharp, clear folds, making n appear sleepy-eyed.

Today his picture is in post offices all r the country. It is on a special ter used for urging people in farming mmunities to sign up for Social Seity. It was printed for national use, ause the Social Security Administion is convinced that Charlie is well r 100 years old, even if he isn't the he claims to be.

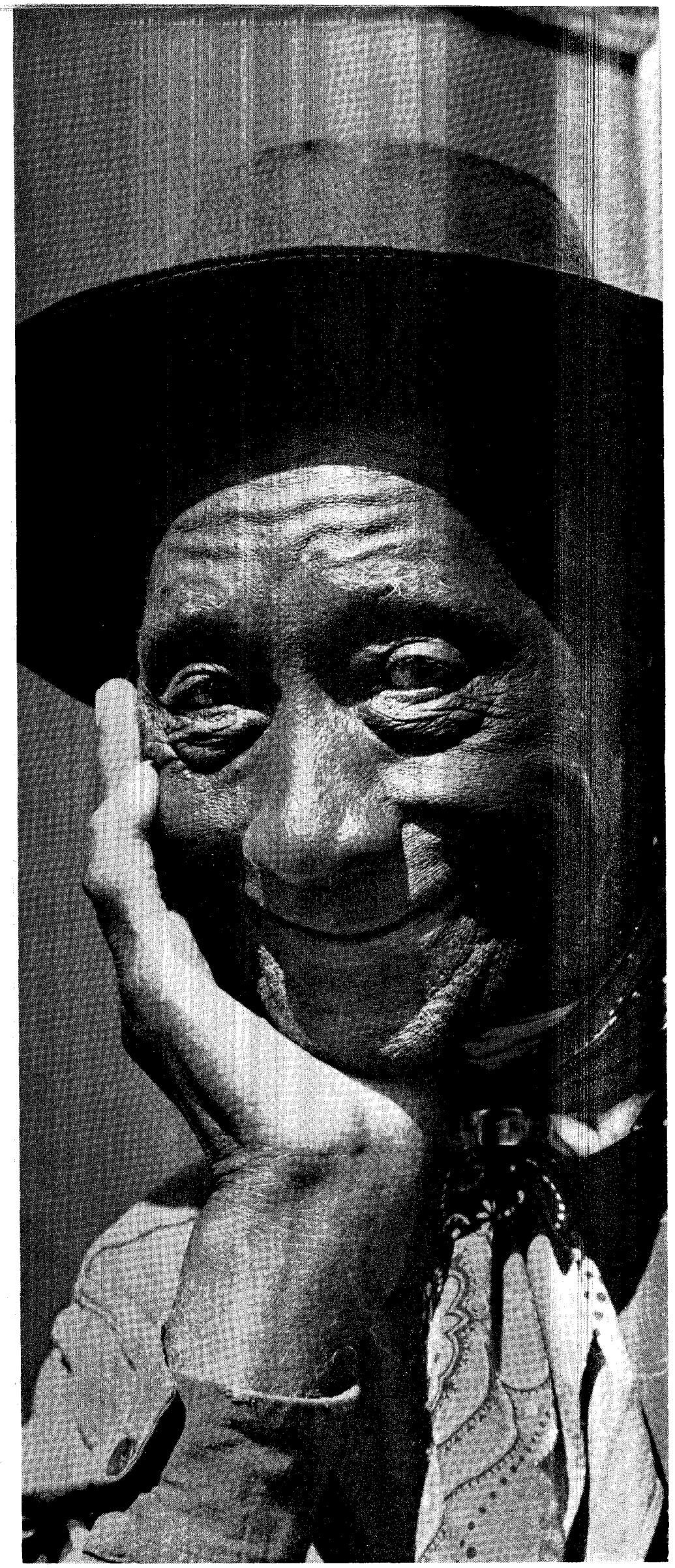
When his age came out, Charlie was longer allowed to climb 20-foot lads, though he insists he needs the rcise and gets tired "just sittin' down" minding his candy-and-soda-pop store in the quiet farm town of Bartow, Fla.

Charlie's story, as he tells it and as it was researched by various Social Security offices, is a peculiar mixture of demonstrable fact, half-truths and out-and-out fiction.

He says he was born Mitchell Watkins in Liberia on the west coast of Africa. His mother's name was Lindy Watkins, but he never knew his father. When he was about 12, a big boat put in at the dock in Liberia. He ran down with the other villagers to have a look, and there on the dock was the first white man Charlie ever saw. The man showed pictures of a country where no one worked and "fritters" grew on trees. He beckoned the crowd on board to show them more wonders: "They took us into what they called the hatch hole—on the lower deck, y'know—showing us all different things," Charlie says. "Well, when they brought us out the hatch hole—on top where you could see—we out on the ocean.

"They treat us OK. Whole lot of people say they treat them bad, but they didn't do us that way. We sleep down the hatch hole—forty, fifty people. They didn't keep us chained. The man who brought us over here, his name Legree. He didn't force us on the boat—he fooled us on."

Admittedly, a slave-ship captain named Legree sounds right out of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but a check of trading-ship records of the time reveals two brothers named Legree both of whom



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to gain weight.

ran slave ships from New Orleans to the African coast.

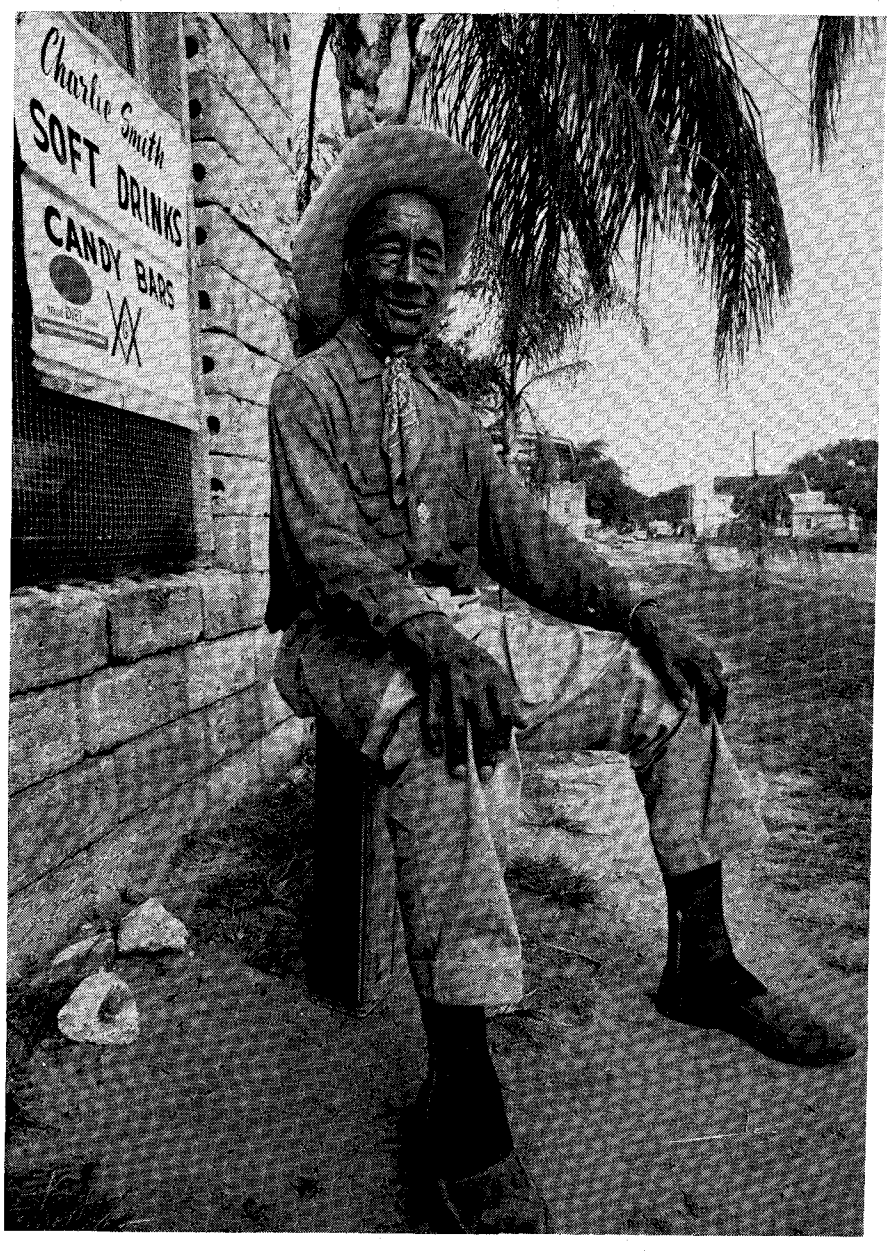
When the ship reached New Orleans, according to Charlie's story, he and the other captives were put in a "large house with a big yard that was fenced like a corral or stockade." This was about July 4, Charlie recalls. "They gave a great big eat, and all day they celebrate that day. And that's the day we were slaved. They put you on a block and bid you. Something like a auction for a horse or a cow. But every time they go to put me up on the block, a big white man he said, 'Don't put that boy up there because that's my boy.' He was real tall and was dressed in the cowboy style and had them big pistols buckled on him. Every time he said, 'Don't put that boy up there,' well, they set me back. And the third time he said, 'I told you—don't put that boy up there,' he just stepped over that rope between us and grabbed me by the hand and put me with his crew. When the slavin' was over, he took us all back to Texas in two old trail wagons—covered wagons, y'know—mules pulled them. He was a cow rancher—had a ranch near Galveston. A big ranch—five, six thousand head of cattle, sheep, horses, mules, pigs—everything but goats. He ain't messin' with no goats. These people in Florida call their places ranches, but they ain't nothin' but cow pastures."

The New Orleans Register of Conveyances reveals "purchases of slaves by John Smith of this city" between April, 1854, and March, 1856. Charlie says the name of his "owner" was Capt. John Smith and that he had a residence in New Orleans as well as in Texas.

"I was raised right in Cap'n Smith's house. The other folks—he had quarters for them, y'know, but I didn't be with them a bit more than he did. I lived right in his house and if any difference between me and his children, I didn't know it. We slept and ate right together. I don't mean only when I was little—when I was a grown man was the same way. I helped raise his children—I suppose to belong to his boy, young John, time he grew up. I had boots and a gun, and I was ridin' horses. I wasn't big enough to do nothin' at that time, but with my pistol on me I'd be riding around, out with the crew."

When Charlie was 21, "Freedom come." Charlie says that Capt. Smith told him he was a free man and could stay or go. Charlie stayed.

So devoted was Charlie to Capt. Smith that he seems to have adopted many of what were probably Smith's attitudes. For example, he says about President Lincoln, "Abraham Lincum



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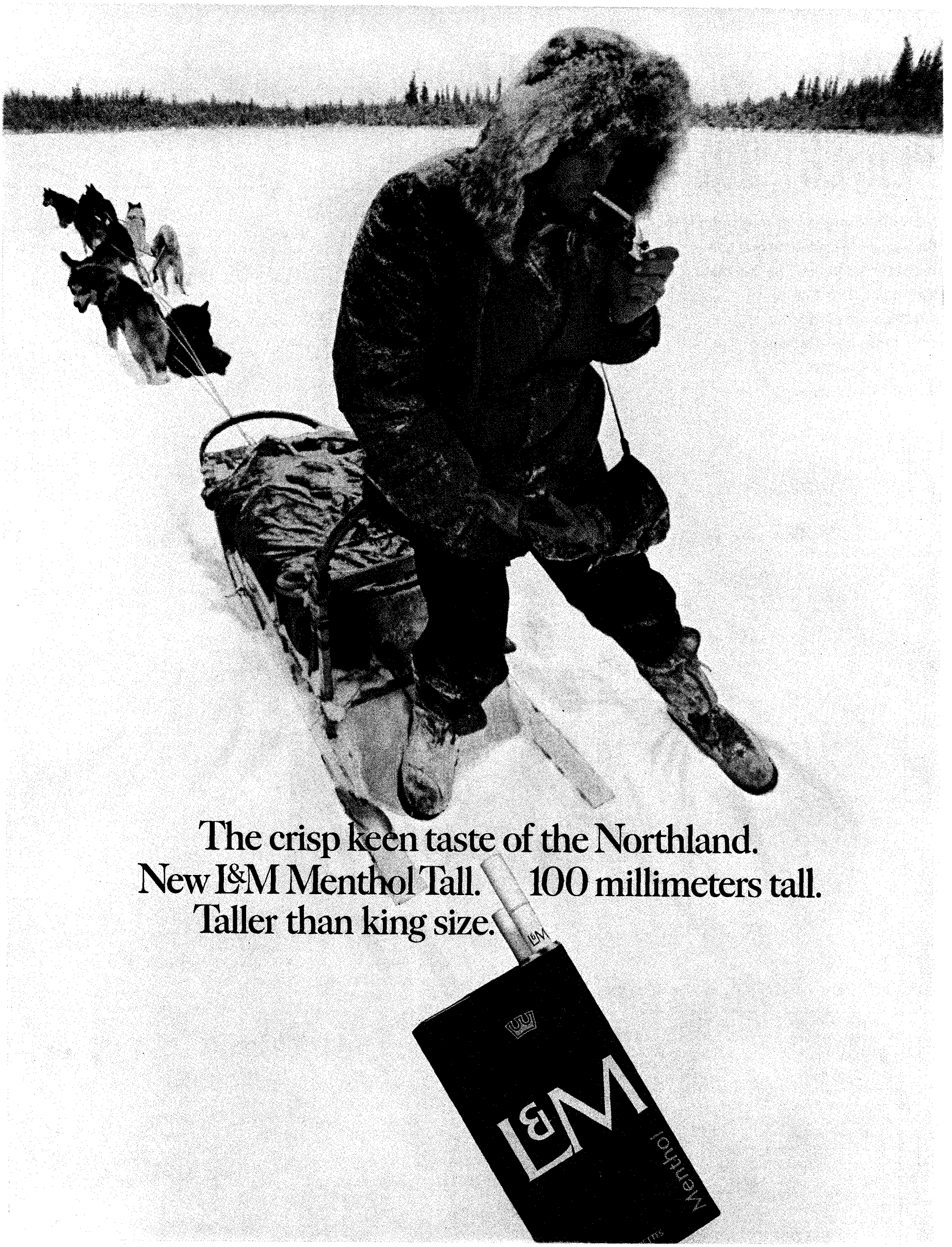

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'Live by the Scriptures,'

says Charlie, 'and the Lord will

lengthen your days.'

was no good." As to whether or not President Lincoln helped free the slaves, Charlie is quick to set the matter straight. "Abraham Lincum didn't free nobody. Abraham Lincum he the first man to make the Jim Crow law. A whole lot of things you read in the history books are not true. I can't read them but I know, I know 'cause I was a grown man just like I am now. And Abraham Lincum ain't freed nobody." Charlie's explanation for the cause of the Civil War is equally definitive: "The North gave up their slaves," Charlie explains, "and they wanted the South to give up theirs, but the South wouldn't. Everybody knows that—but I know why. You see, them overseers they could make the girls do anything they wanted. And if the girls wouldn't do what they wanted, they would whup them. So the girls didn't want to be whupped. So the overseers didn't want to give up the slaves. That's why the North and South had the war, and that's why the South called the Northern people Yankee."

After Capt. Smith died and the family dispersed, Charlie drifted here and there in the South. He won't tell why he left Texas and grows restive when pressed for details of his life from 1900 to about 1930. All he will say is that he worked for a turpentine man named Johnny Hall on the Yellow River Road in Alabama. "When I was first on the job, some fellers figured I had a lot of money 'cause I'm a big gambler, and they made up a plot to kill me and rob me. That Sunday evening I was feeling kind of puny and layin' in the bunk, and they thought I was out. And I heard them talking. 'He got a bunch of money and two big pistols, but we grab him and choke him, and get the money.' So when they left I sent a boy up to tell the preacher to come. And I give the preacher all my money for safekeeping—it was about three hundred dollars. And that same night the preacher he took the deacon's wife and run away with the three hundred dollars.

"About a year later I thought I saw that same preacher in the church. That man favored him so much that I shoot through the window, but the Lord moved my hand and I missed.

"They was tryin' me in the court, and I told the judge, 'Please, your honor, anywhere I meet him I'm gonna shoot him.' And I still mean it—if I see him and know it's him. I ain't gonna make no mistake the next time.

"That's when Cap'n Smith's baby daughter Ruthie come and get me. I written back to her—a big gambler, friend of mine, he did the writing. Ruthie got up in court and said, 'Please, your honor, don't ask him any more questions,' and the judge asked her, 'Who you and what your business here?' and she said, 'I'm Ruthie Smith from Texas, and he raised me from a baby, and I come to get him.' That was the year McKinley was killed [1901].

"Along then the 'publicans was in power. When the 'publicans in power, you didn't get paid by the hour. You get paid by the day. One dollar a day—that was a big worker. You 'bout killed yourself doin' it. And when McKinley got shot, Roosevelt was his Vice and he come in. He had to serve out his three years, and when he ran again he promised, 'I'm going to help the working man.' And wages started going up and have been going up ever since. And the other Roosevelt who was his kin, those two Roosevelts did more for the people than any man in the chair. Of course this President who got killed couple years ago—he was doing powerful good but he never had a chance."

After Charlie left the turpentine camp in Alabama, he moved to Mississippi. "Used to work for sawmills, but not in the mills—I used to work in the woods hauling logs with a mule team. Them logs they were so big—I never see such big logs."

By 1926 Charlie was in Florida working in the citrus groves of Auburndale. He lived there and in Polk City until several years ago, when he moved to Bartow.

"How I come to Bartow—I come to locate my son Chester. I left his mother when Chester about thirteen years old. So then I didn't see Chester till about eight years ago. I didn't know where he was. I looked, and I put an ad in for him. And these people tell me a man named Chester Smith stay in Bartow. I was staying by myself out in the country near Polk City. And they brought me here. We stop at a drugstore, and I ask, 'Anyone know Chester Smith?' I was dressed like the law—my boots on and my gun belt—and one fellow said 'I'll take you there.' I went on up and saw his wife, and I say, 'You know a man in this town named Chester Smith?' 'Yes sir, that's my husband.' 'You know his daddy?' 'No, I never see his daddy. Chester's daddy was a outlaw man. He got in a shootin' fray, and he got killed. And I tell her I'm his daddy."

The Spears Chiropractic Hospital

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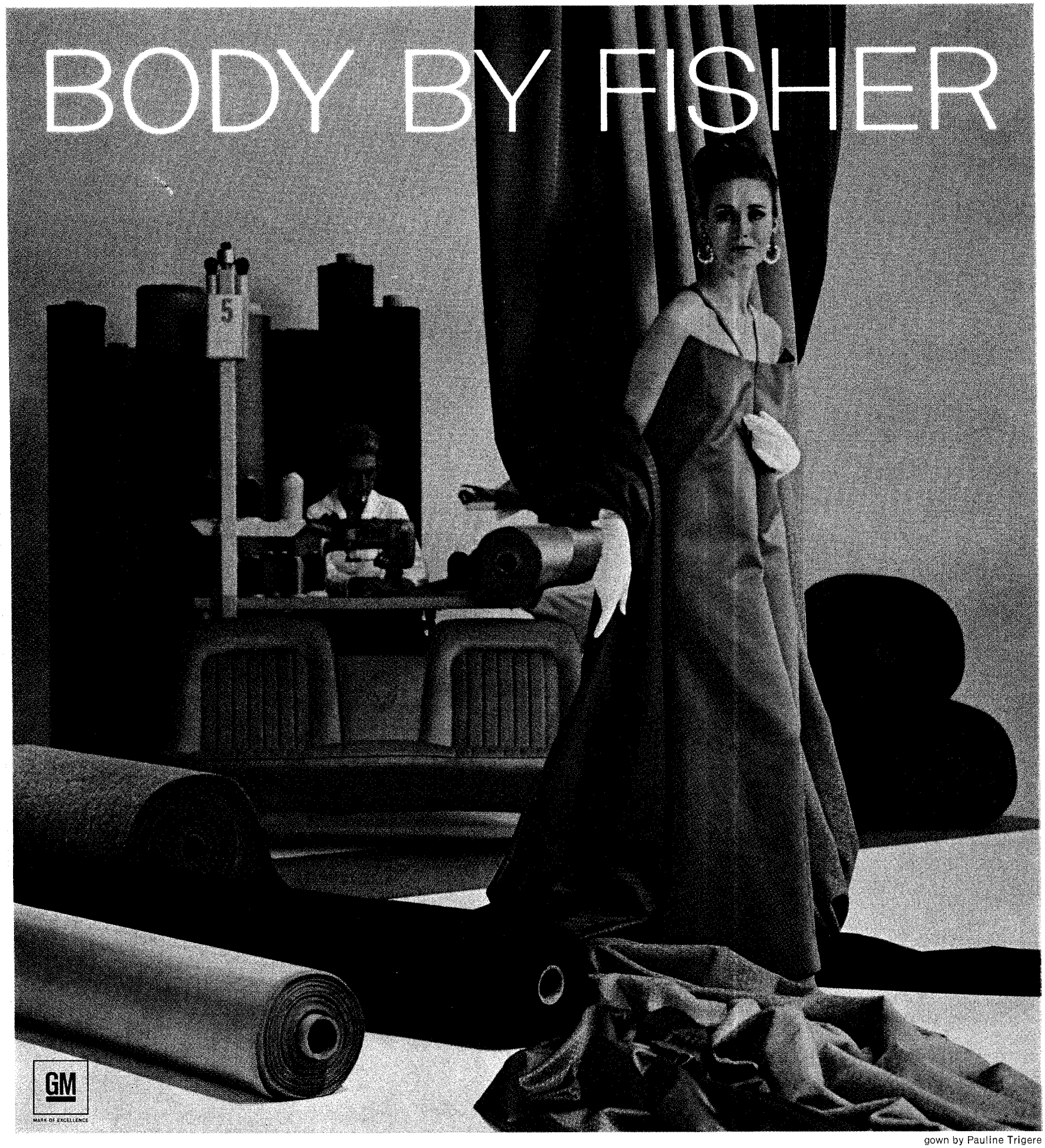

gown by Pauline Trigere

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in Denver, Colo., arranged recently to have Charlie brought there in connection with the Spears Longevity Research Project. Fluoroscopic examination revealed two slugs in his remarkably well-preserved body—dramatic testimony to his toughness of flesh and spirit. When asked about the slugs, Charlie turns arch: "Is that a fact? They claim there's some bullets in me? How come I don't know about that?" After much prodding, Charlie admits that he got one of the bullets in a gunfight. He says his opponent tried to shoot the gun from his hand and claims the bullet hit the pinkie of his right hand and traveled up into his arm. He cannot straighten the little finger on his right hand. Charlie says this happened when he was a cowboy in Texas.

Charlie rather wore out his welcome at the Spears Hospital, since the nurses were always having to keep an eye on him to make sure he didn't go off on a prowl for a little snifter. But while the nurses were having a rough time of it, Charlie enjoyed his stay thoroughly. "It was so fine," he says. "One hundred and seventy-six doctors examining me with big X-ray machines. One for my head, one for my body. I be laying there stark naked with them taking pictures of my insides."

When Charlie moved to Bartow, the Social Security Administration expected him to retire. Instead, Charlie opened a store. He could get more money by going on welfare, but he doesn't want to. "They ask too many questions—how many chickens you got and how many eggs each lay," he says. "Too much red tape. I can't be bothered with that."

Charlie's store is neat and clean. By one wall is Charlie's cot, protected by a white sheet. The white sheet itself is protected by a layer of fresh newspapers. Some of Charlie's friends come to visit in their work clothes, and Charlie doesn't want them messing up his best piece of furniture. On the back of Charlie's sofa are dusty Christmas packages still wrapped and bearing gift cards and greetings. The presents arrived four years ago, but Charlie tied them up again to provide a holiday atmosphere in his house. There are four folding wooden chairs, backs and seats covered with glittering aluminum foil, arranged around the room. A spare handkerchief hangs over the head of the narrow iron bedstead in his private quarters, separated from the rest of the room by a partition. His refrigerator is a rusting, yellow soda-pop cooler. Charlie's store has electricity but neither heat nor hot water.

"I manage nicely by myself," Charlie says. "I get up about six, seven o'clock in the morning and take my bath. I use a foot tub and scrub every morning with soap. In the winter I heat my water on a little red-hot electric plate. The rest of the time I just takes it cold. Then I shave my face, and when my hair gets a little long, I shaves my head. I clean the store at night, and sometimes I sweep again in the morning. Generally I eats some cookies. I sometimes drink chocolate milk when I fix something, but mostly I just drinks clear water. I don't have regular meals. I eat all through the day—cookies and milk and a little fruit. Sometimes I get some hog's-head cheese.

"I can't drink much now. I drink, but I drink in a decent way. I couldn't do my business if I didn't. When I go to bed and know I don't meet nobody, then sometime I take a little drink. You can handle just about anything if you do it right."

There seems to be little connective tissue binding Charlie's "reminiscences," and it is usually difficult to assess how much Charlie embroiders when he does reminisce. He tells his stories with great emphasis on descriptive details, and the listener is sidetracked by these convincing bits, overlooking the fact that important parts of the story are completely vague and almost impossible to check. William Arnold, the district Social Security manager who has become a good friend of Charlie's, recently told Charlie that he was getting to be "the biggest liar in Polk County." Charlie replied, "I don't lie. People likes them stories to have facts in 'em, and the more facts I remember the more they like 'em."

At times, however, Charlie's stories are just a little too poignant to be true. If one asks Charlie why he uses the name "Charlie Smith" instead of his own, Mitchell Watkins, Charlie's reply goes: "Well, the man who was my boss, Cap'n Smith, when he take me in to raise me like his own family, he named me after himself. One day when I was about twenty-one, Cap'n Smith call me in the house, and I see he's laying in his bed. I don't figure there's nothing wrong, but he say to me, 'Bring me that Bible.' I tell him, 'OK, Dad'—I called him Dad like the rest of his own children did. Then Dad makes me put my hand on the Bible. Then he takes it away and reads all of Genesis. Then he makes me take an oath. Then he goes on and reads me Revelations. Then he asks me to take another oath. Then he says, 'Now swear you will stay with my family until they are all dead or until you die.' Then he wraps his arms around my neck and says, 'Don't ever change your name.' I say, 'Yes, Dad.' Then he don't say no more. Just lays his head back on the pillow.

"I call to one of the boys and say, 'Take the saddles off the horses, all but one. Send that horse and a rider over to the other place [the Smiths had two ranches] and tell them Dad is gone.'" After he finishes this tale, Charlie studies his listener's reaction to check how it has gone over, and then one realizes the whole thing is a scene from an old William S. Hart movie. If Charlie is *not* the oldest living man, he is at least the oldest living con man.

It is nearly impossible to check back more than 100 years to prove Charlie is exactly as old as he says he is. But Liberia took a census in 1843, the year after Charlie says he was born, and Watkins was then a common family name there. Moreover, Charlie can still speak a few words of what he calls "the African language." A Liberian official, visiting Bartow under a State Department exchange program, identified Charlie's phrases as the dialect of a Liberian province. Records show a slave sale in New Orleans on July 5, the day after Charlie says he was sold. Finally, an affidavit on file in the city hall, Auburndale, Fla., signed by Lee J. Pearson (now deceased) states: "According to Charlie Smith's birth record, he was 90 years old when he worked for me in 1932." Such evidence is, of course, purely circumstantial.

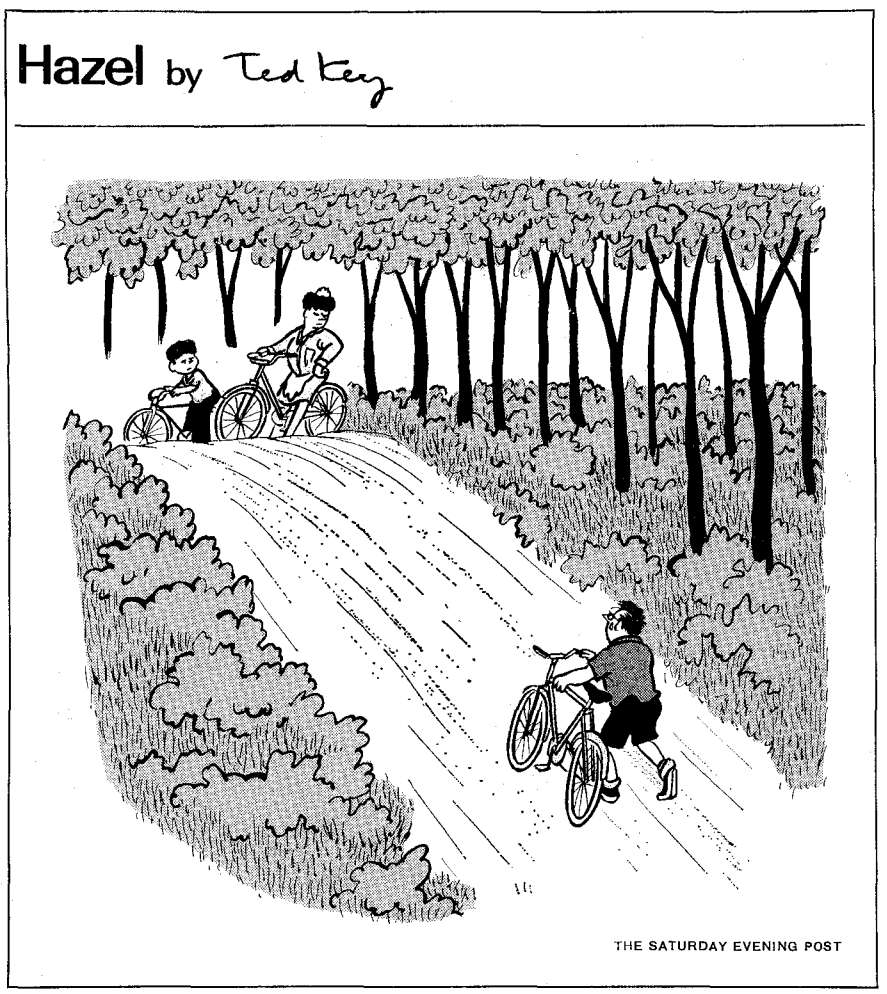
Charlie modestly credits the Lord for his longevity. "I try to live nearer the Ten Commandments," he says. "I know I do wrong things, but if you treat anybody like you want them to treat you, and you try to live by the Scriptures, the Lord will hear your prayers like he heard Jonah and Daniel, and He will lengthen your days." He also offers a somewhat more concrete method for prolonging life: "I never drink no green milk—only chocolate. I never drink coffee. I don't eat no table food—cooked stuff not too good for you."

How long does Charlie think he can live? "I say I like to be as old as Methuselah," Charlie explains, "but I'm just going to go along here and live as long as I can. Once Ripley had my picture with another old man. [The man was Javier Pereira of Colombia. Ripley's caption stated Pereira was 167 years old and drank coffee, smoked a good cigar and never worried. Charlie was listed as 113—the oldest fruit picker in the country.] That old man drink lots of coffee. What work for one don't always work for another. I heard that other man died, so now I'm the oldest living man."

On Charlie's 122nd birthday—July 4, 1964—some of the neighbors got together and brought him a cake. It is a bakery cake decorated with blue and white icing and completely covered with 122 candles. Charlie feels very sentimental about the cake. He put it in the dry side of the pop cooler and shows it to visitors, but he never took a bite of it. One of the guests who surprised him on his birthday brought a hand-lettered sign. It reads:

MOVED TO FLORIDA YEARS AGO
This Man 122 years old
BELIEVE IT OR NOT
He was kidnapped from S. Africa
When 12 Brought to Texas
Worked for Jesse James
And other characters
MOVE TO FLORIDA AND LIVE LONGER

Charlie says the woman from across the street sometimes brings him lunch. "I always give her a dollar here and there. But she don't want to take it, because she says I am too important a person that she like to do something for me. But I don't want nobody sayin' they helpin' out poor ol' Charlie Smith. I like to take care of myself." □



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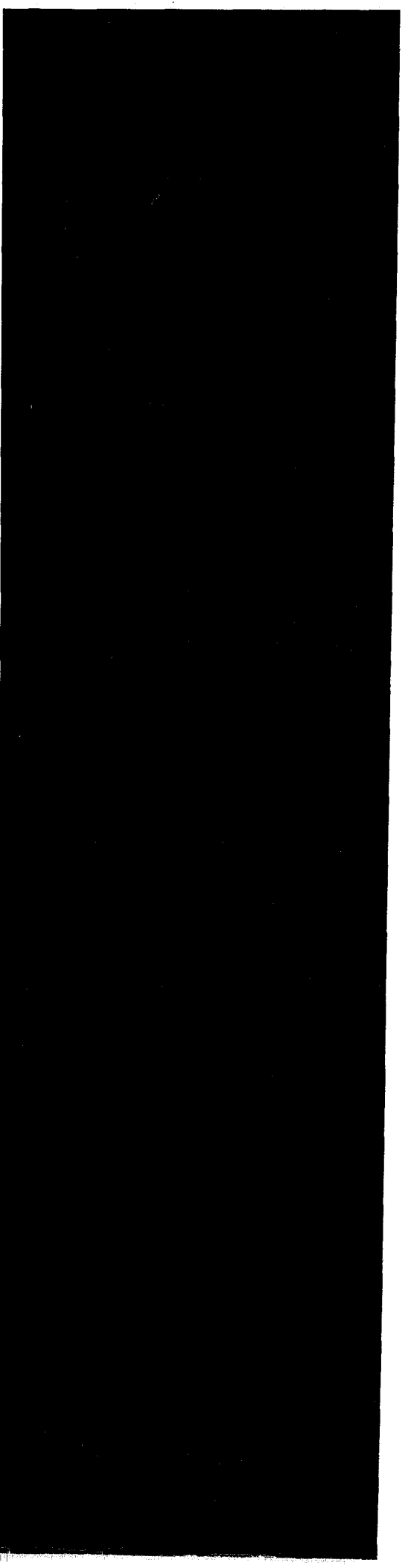
Why children commit suicide

They kill themselves when they are in a crisis or a storm of emotion, when there is no one to talk to, when they fail. And the rate of these deaths has almost doubled in 10 years.



The vital statistics of the United States are great rows of numbers. On plain white paper, printed out by computers, they do not look very interesting. But between the numbers there are dark places where nightmares lurk.

In the last year for which detailed statistics are complete (1964), 4,078 men and women aged 65 and older committed verified acts of suicide in America. Many were suffering the hopeless loneliness of the aged, some were tormented by incurable sickness, all were approaching the natural end of their lives. Their self-inflicted deaths were tragic.

That same year 14,674 persons aged 25 to 64, adults in their prime, committed the ultimate act of despair. Their deaths were shocking and outrageous.

That same year, 1,084 almost-adults of college age, 652 boys and girls of high-school age and 92 children aged 14 and younger killed themselves. For these deaths at the beginning of life it is hard to find any words at all.

The mind recoils from the numbers. Each year for several years: 80 to 110 children, 500 to 750 adolescents. And gradually, but perceptibly, more.

In a moderately wealthy Chicago suburb there was 11-year-old Billy. "Billy the Kook," the neighborhood kids called him: a different kind of kid, a nonparticipant, a loser, a loner. One Saturday night a babysitter went up to his room and found him hanging by the neck from the clothes rod in his closet. He was dead. The policeman who cut him down, a big, tough man who had once worked in the city of Chicago and was no stranger to death, emerged from the house with tears on his cheeks. "A kid!" he kept saying. "A kid!"

Then there was a sad, timid little 8-year-old named Gregory. He climbed out on an apartment window ledge six floors high. Neighbors rousted his mother from a nearby saloon and brought her home. A Catholic priest looked back from the window as she burst into the apartment. "Don't frighten him!" warned the priest. The mother pushed past and yelled, "Come in here, boy, or you're going to get the whaling of your life!" and Gregory dropped and died.

The overall United States suicide rate (number of suicides per 100,000 persons per year) has not changed greatly in recent years. From a high point of 15.5 in 1930 it fell to 14.4 in 1940, 11.4 in 1950 and 10.8 in 1964—making the U.S. one of the less suicide-prone nations.

But the suicide rates of children and teen-agers have been rising rapidly—in fact, have almost doubled in 10 years. The rate for children aged 10 to 14 was 0.28 per 100,000 in 1954, 0.5 in 1964. The rate for adolescents aged 15 to 19 was 2.4 per 100,000 in 1954, 4.0 in 1964.

"The rise in these rates is frightening in itself," says Dr. Harry Bakwin, a New York pediatrician who has studied child suicides in his city for more than 10 years. "What brings young suicides to our attention even more prominently is the fact that other childhood killers have been brought under control. Diseases like polio, appendicitis and tuberculosis. Now suicide claims more children's and teen-agers' lives than any of those one-time killers."

"Nor do the statistics tell the whole story," says Dr. Edwin Shneidman, chief of the newly formed Center for Studies of Suicide Prevention in the National Institute of Mental Health. "Suicides at all ages are notoriously underreported, and this is especially true of child suicides. In the first place, it's usually quite hard to say whether a given death is suicide. You find a child's body in a river. What do you call it? Accident? Murder? Suicide? In the absence of clues, the death generally gets entered in the 'accidents' column. And even in cases where the death is known to be suicide, the parents are likely to hide the fact if they can. The parent doesn't normally want the world to know about it."

The National Education Association guesses that there are at least twice as many child suicides each year as are reported in the statistics. And for every successful suicide there are many attempts and "gestures" in which the child uses suicide as a way of calling attention to an emotional plight. Medical textbooks used to say, without bothering to prove it, that there are five attempts for every actual child suicide—but that was in a time before the subject was studied seriously. It is becoming apparent that the actual ratio is much higher than 5-to-1. Dr. Bakwin estimates it at 100-to-1. Dr. Harold Jacobziner, former assistant health commissioner of New York, says perhaps 15 percent of childhood and teen-age home accidents (poisonings, falls, electrocutions) "are associated with a suicidal intent," as are many teen-age car crashes.

If it is true that only half the actual suicides are reported as such, and if there are 100 attempts and gestures for every finished act, the 1964 statistics grow still more frightening. They are: 180 suicides and 18,000 attempts or gestures by children 14 and younger; 1,300 and 130,000 by high-school kids.

Any suicide attempt—serious or not—is essentially a cry for help, according to Dr. Michael Peck, staff psychologist at the Suicide Prevention Center of Los Angeles. Obviously, parents who love their children would rather learn about the problems in a less drastic way, but children don't always communicate their troubles directly, and even the most well-meaning parent can be blind to a youngster's growing unhappiness. Says Dr. Shneidman: "It is important that parents understand more about suicide and learn to spot the pre-suicidal warning signs."

This would have been hollow advice a few years ago, for until recently not even doctors understood child suicide well or had anything very helpful to say about warning signs. Back in 1957 Dr. Bakwin combed the previous 20 years' medical and psychological literature and found only five child-

Photographs by Philippe Halsman

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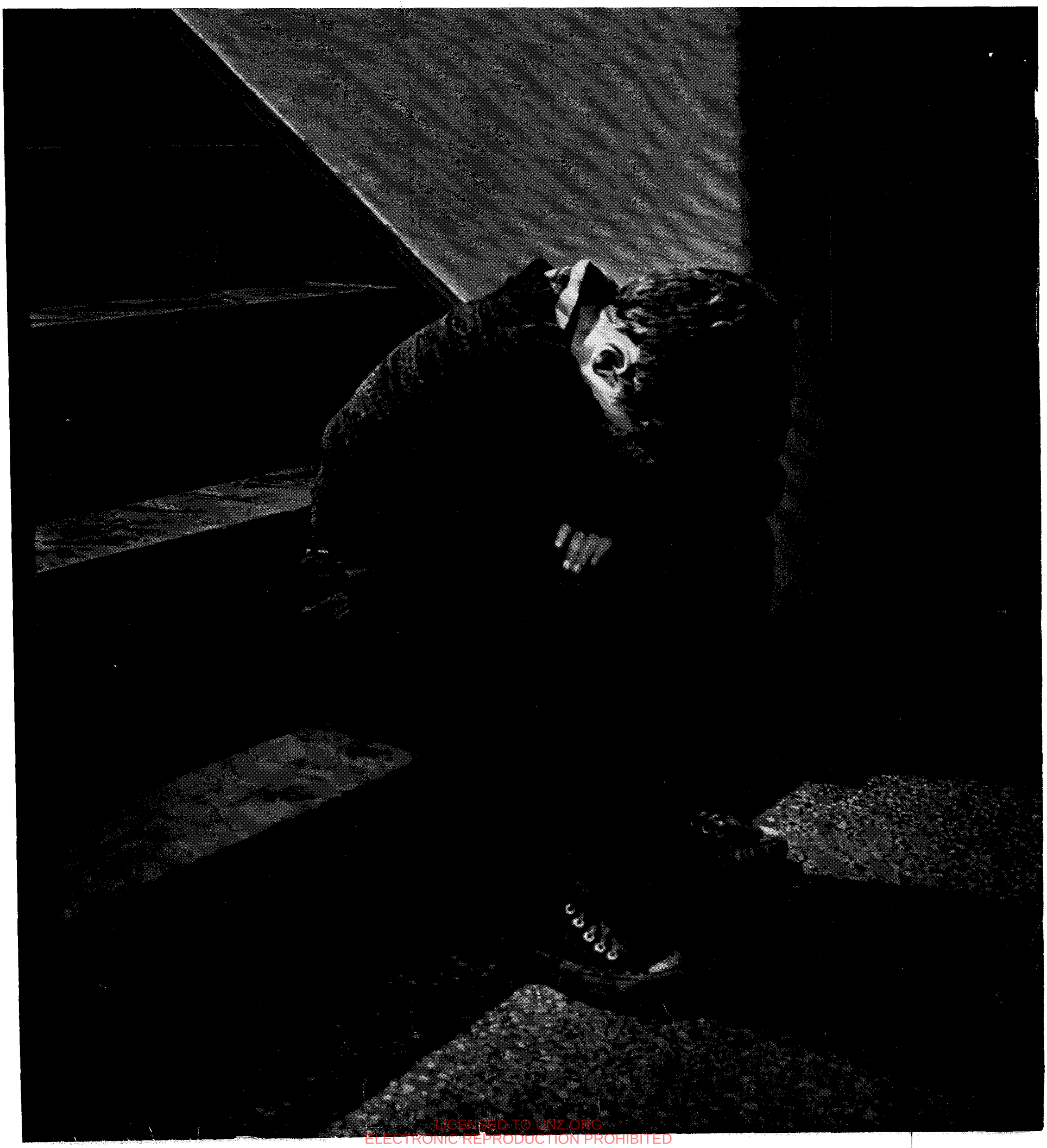
By Max Gunther



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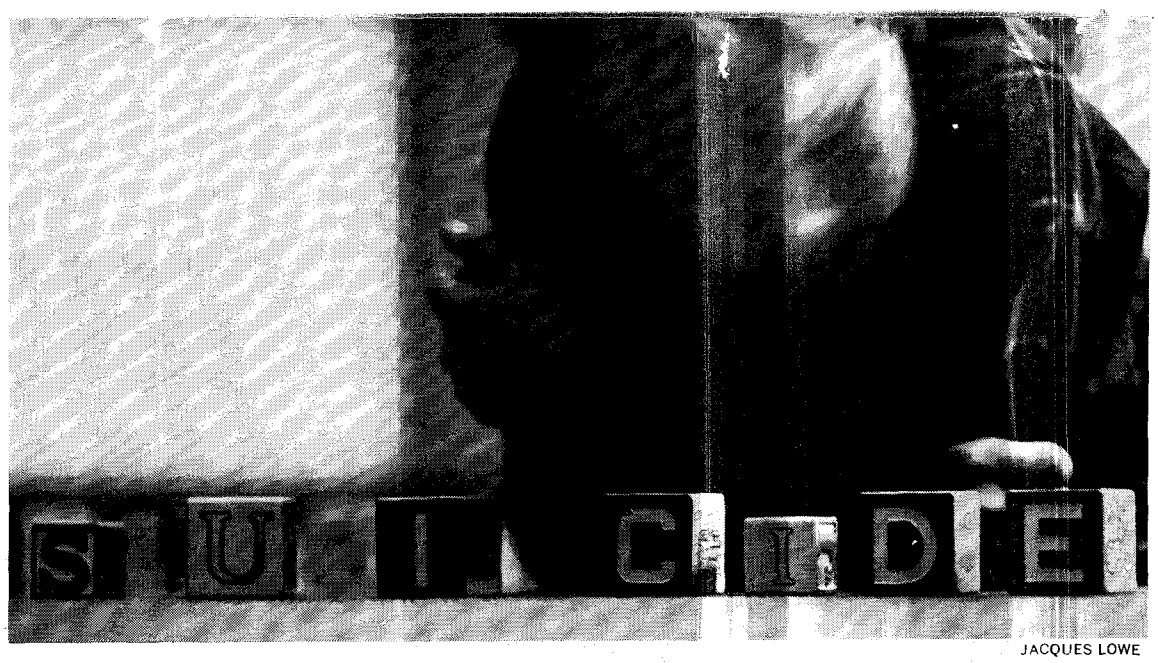

JACQUES LOWE

suicide studies worth mentioning. Now, quite suddenly, it has become alarming enough to make many people care. Education officials in New Jersey, Ohio, California and several other states have begun to probe students' suicides to find whether and how they are related to the school experience. At Ohio State University, education professor Jack Frymier has begun a long-term study of grade- and high-school educational policies to see if these are related to child suicide. ("Six kids have attempted suicide within a mile of my home in the past year," says Dr. Frymier, explaining his interest.) The new U.S. Center for Studies of Suicide Prevention has made a number of research grants. In addition, many new suicide-prevention centers have been formed in cities across the country (there were four in 1960; now there are more than 40).

The director of the U.S. Center, Dr. Shneidman, is a balding, affable man of 48 who used to work with the Suicide Prevention Center of Los Angeles, one of the first established. Says he: "This whole mounting research effort is really aimed at answering just one short question: *Why?*"

Until recently nobody could give any really satisfactory answers. Policemen and doctors sifting through the emotional ashes of a young suicide's life could often find triggering events—harsh punishment by a parent or teacher, or fear of punishment, or a major downfall in school or sex—and these would be labeled "causes." But they were only parts of causes. Millions of kids get punished, fail in school, have sex problems—but only some kill themselves. What makes one youngster jump out a window while the kid next door, hounded by much the same problems, muddles through?

One way to gather clues is through an exhaustive probing of the young victim's entire existence, his relationships, his thoughts and feelings about his world. Many researchers are trying this. Others are feeling their way along what they think is an equally promising pathway: talking to children who tried suicide but are still alive to tell about it.

Several apparently basic facts about child suicide are now emerging. One fact is that there is usually (but, bafflingly, not always) a triggering event immediately before the suicide—a major crisis. It is always a youngster who has been troubled for a long time, and it is often one who has threatened to kill himself in the past—and, usually, has not been taken seriously. In a study of 299 children aged 8 to 19 who had tried to kill themselves with poison, Dr. Jacobziner found that the most common trigger was a disciplinary crisis. Eighty of the 299 had been punished (unfairly, they believed) at home or in school just before the suicide attempt. The others had been through emotional storms of jealousy in love, loss of a parent by divorce or death, birth of an illegitimate child.

Another basic fact seems to be that serious suicide attempts almost always take place in a condition of extreme loneliness. "This is why suicide-prevention centers can succeed," says the Rev. Kenneth Murphy, director of a Boston center called Rescue, Inc. "Would-be suicides are surprisingly easy to talk back to life," he goes on. "They are never a hundred-percent sure they want to die. All they need, most of them, is one friendly voice saying, 'Don't'—and they won't. A child will take his life when there is no such voice around."

The loneliness of the young suicide was demonstrated last year at Ohio State University. Educational specialist Frederick Reese got the names of 20 youngsters aged 19 and under (out of a total of 169) who had killed themselves in Ohio in the past four years. He went to each youngster's hometown and talked to teachers, doctors and others who had known the victim. He found that, with only one exception, these kids had been "social isolates"—not necessarily rejected or pushed around by their schoolmates but simply ignored. "In fact," Dr. Reese said, "in some cases it was hard to believe that the youngster had existed at all." When local newspapers reported the youngster's suicide, teachers and students would stare baffled at the headlines and try to recall the name and face. "Who was he? Did he go to *this* school?"

Another key characteristic of suicidal children, researchers report, is an overwhelming, permanent and general sense of failure. As Dr. Bakwin puts it: "This is the kid who feels inadequate all the time, everywhere, doing anything."

Kids set goals for themselves or have goals set for them by others. Most of them achieve at least some of the goals. Those who achieve none, and become obsessed by the fact, are suicide candidates. Three years ago Dr. James Jan-Tausch of the New Jersey State Education Department studied the stories of 41 youngsters, aged 7 to 19, who had killed themselves between 1960 and 1963. In every one of the 41 cases, he found, the youngster had been having some kind of difficulty in school and had been told, unsympathetically, that he was "capable of doing better." He was constantly reminded that there was a goal for him to achieve, and that he wasn't achieving it. (To seal their fates, not one of the 41 had a close friend or confidante.)

One 13-year-old girl landed in a New Jersey hospital after swallowing two bottles of orange-flavored children's aspirin. The tape recording of her interview with a psychiatrist is a bitter song.

The doctor: "Ready to go back to school now?"

The girl: "No! I hate school. I want to stay here. I wish I was dead."

"Did something bad happen to you in school?"

"School is bad all the time. I'm dumb, all the teachers say so. None of the kids like me. The boys think I'm nothing."

"But you're a pretty girl. If you'd ——"

"I'm not pretty, even my mother says I'm not pretty. I'm nothing."

This girl's suicide attempt could have been avoided. According to Dr. Shneidman, 8 out of 10 persons—adults and children alike—give "definite warnings" of suicidal intentions. There is a popular belief that people who really mean to take their own lives keep quiet about it, but the belief is erroneous. They talk. Also, there are "behavioral" warnings. Before a suicide attempt, a youngster may be depressed more deeply and for a longer time (several days or even weeks) than seems normal. Or he may suddenly change from shy to aggressive, from talkative to silent. A parent or doctor noticing such warnings must assess them against the youngster's general situation. The threat, "I'll kill myself!" may be only a momentary emotional outburst. But it may be real in the case of a youngster who is lonesome, isolated, up against problems that he feels helpless to solve.

When psychiatrists probe these cases they most often find extreme emotional turmoil resulting from an unhappy home situation. The home may be torn apart by divorce, death, alcoholism. Or it may be "unhappy" only in the youngster's eyes. His parents may sincerely believe they're doing a good job. Dr. Jan-Tausch in New Jersey tells of a youngster whose overprotective mother wouldn't let him be a boy among boys, and whose father was so concerned about a future college degree that he made the boy study six hours a night. The boy did poorly in school and falsified report cards so his father wouldn't know. Friendless, baffled, under intolerable pressure, he finally gave up. His parents found him hanging in the attic. Arranged in a neat circle on the floor were half a dozen test papers, each marked with a red "F."

In other instances of child suicide, the parents may be not only well-intentioned but entirely blameless. One of the most remarkable cases on record is that of a boy who tried three times to kill himself in 1965 and 1966. He was five when he tried the first time. Only a few verifiable suicide attempts in U.S. medical history have occurred at an earlier age. In an interview this year with a *Post* reporter, his parents told their story of frustration, despair and reborn hope.

The mother and father are calm and intelligent; they have been described by a doctor as "almost model parents: wise, kind, loving." They have three children, an infant girl, and two boys now aged 7 and 10. The 10-year-old is a bright, alert boy who rates as "gifted" on intelligence tests. "Everything is easy for him," says his mother. "He breezes through life." The younger boy, Charlie, has not found life so simple.

As a toddler Charlie was somewhat clumsy. He was slow in learning to walk, fell more often than most children. This clumsiness persisted as he grew to nursery-school age. His parents did not think it was anything to worry about. Aside from his frequent accidents he seemed to be a kid like any other: good-looking, bright-eyed, sometimes rebellious, apparently happy most of the time. But as he advanced to the age of 5, the began to worry a little. In his clumsiness he found it hard to keep up with other children's games and with kindergarten activities. "He wanted to be as good at everything as his older brother," says his father, "and he couldn't, and it frustrated him. He had to try twice as hard as anybody else to master some skill like riding a tricycle. In the hard effort he became loud, aggressive, hyperactive and domineering." Adds the mother: "Ye and he did bizarre things, took silly risks to prove he was as good as the other kids. The other sensed something strange about him, and they began to shy away from him. He became an outsider always battling to break in and be one of the bunch.

And so little Charlie had some of the key characteristics of the potential child suicide. He was socially isolated, and he seemed doomed to eternal failure in his efforts to reach his goal

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'All they need, most of them, is one friendly voice saying, 'Don't'—and they won't.'

Only later did his parents discover the root of his trouble, which was not emotional but physical.

Charlie was afflicted with *petit mal* epilepsy. This disorder is common but hard even for a trained physician to spot. The victim has no convulsions or other dramatic symptoms. Instead, he has frequent brief blackout attacks. Each attack may last only a second, and the victim himself may not realize what has happened, but he emerges from the spell dazed and confused. One moment he may be riding a bike, perfectly balanced; the next moment he abruptly finds himself falling and doesn't know why.

Charlie's unhappiness was made worse by the fact that his father was in the Navy, away from home for long periods of time. "He was mad at me for not being around to help him," says the father. "He began to have nightmares in which I got hurt or killed. He'd wake up screaming. Some psychiatrists have since told me these dreams represented his frustration and anger. In his dreams he got revenge on me. The poor little guy."

One night Charlie had what was evidently a particularly vivid dream of his father's death in war action. Trying to reconstruct the chain of events later, psychiatrists guessed that Charlie felt swamped with remorse when he awoke the next morning. "He seemed to believe," one doctor reported, "that his dream had been real, that in some way he had made it come true." Says the mother: "I remember now, he talked about his daddy a lot that day." Apparently he wanted to see his father and ask forgiveness for the dream, talk things over, explain that everything was all right between them. Then he went out to the garage, got a rope and tied one end to the overhead door. He climbed up on a footlocker, tied the rope around his neck and jumped.

His weight pulled the garage door down so that his feet reached the ground. He had botched the job, and everybody thought it was just another of Charlie's harebrained stunts.

A few weeks later he tried again. He climbed onto the footlocker and knotted the rope around his neck. "Stop!" screamed a next-door housewife who happened to look out her window at that moment. "Stop! Don't do it!" "I *will* do it!" shouted Charlie, and did. This time he had made no mistakes. The door did not roll down. He swung by the neck until the horrified neighbor ran over and untied him.

Charlie went into a hospital with several rope burns on his neck. After exhaustive examinations doctors discovered his hidden epilepsy. But in the next year Charlie had two more terrifying adventures. Once, in an apparent fit of jealousy, he tied a shoelace around his baby sister's neck. His mother entered the room just as he was finishing the knot. She had no chance to say anything before Charlie was shouting hysterically, "I wasn't going to strangle her! I wasn't, I wasn't!" Soon afterward he threw himself in front of a moving bus. The driver stopped just in time.

Charlie's father left the Navy and has taken a civilian job. "Charlie needs stability. I'll see he gets it," he says. Charlie has not attempted suicide for a year now and seems to be growing calmer. "We have a lot of hope," says his mother. "But it's hard to make predictions. There are so many unanswered questions. . . ."

There are, indeed, many unanswered questions about child suicide. Nobody knows, for example, why more children kill themselves in the spring than in any other season of the year. (This same odd phenomenon occurs among adults.) Nor does anybody know why three times as many boys as girls kill themselves; why twice as many girls as boys make unsuccessful suicide attempts or gestures; why the suicide rate of white children and teen-agers is almost double that of Negro youngsters.

Another baffling set of facts deals with the startling differences among nations in child-suicide rates. The 1966 edition of the World Health Organization's yearly global diagnosis, dealing mainly with data gathered in 1963, shows the U.S. to rank 13th among 27 listed nations in terms of the severity of its child-suicide problem. In that year the suicide rate (cases per 100,000 persons) among American boys aged 10–14 was 0.9, and among boys aged 15–19, 6.0. By contrast, West Berlin's rates were a horrifying 2.0 and 37.2. If you eliminate West Berlin because it isn't strictly a country, then the highest-ranking country was Hungary, with 5.0 and 21.1, followed by Czechoslovakia, Austria and Switzerland. The lowest-ranking countries were Norway (0 and 0.6), Italy, England and Belgium. (Russia and China don't usually release vital statistics.)

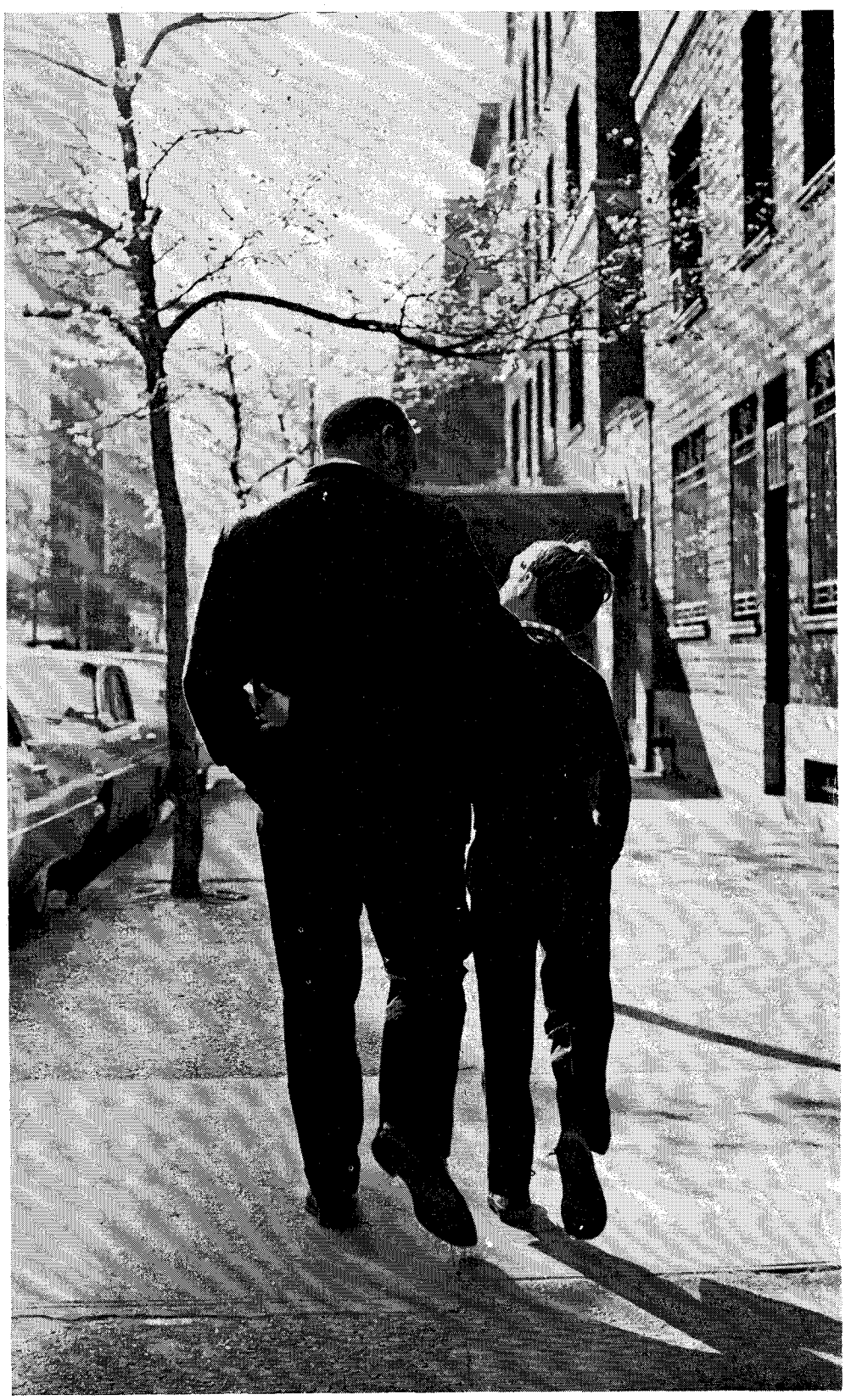
Dr. Harry Bakwin was once called to treat a 5½-year-old boy who had jumped out of a seventh-floor window. The boy was stuporous for five days, but by incredible luck had done no major damage except to break some bones in one foot. Probing into the youngster's history, Dr. Bakwin found—hardly believing it—that for at least two years he apparently had been obsessed by the idea of suicide.

Like many children he had been a headbanger in his infancy. But the habit didn't go away as he grew older. It got worse. Instead of banging his head on his crib mattress, he would bang it on the floor or against a wall whenever he was angry. At the age of 3½ he deliberately stepped out of a first-floor window. At the age of four he began to threaten to kill himself. "At five years, four months," reported the flabbergasted Dr. Bakwin in the *Journal of Pediatrics*, "while being taken to a play group in a bus, he would repeatedly leave the bus when it stopped and rush out into the open road among the moving cars. He would ride his bicycle in front of automobiles moving toward him. The kindergarten teacher reported that he tried to smother himself under a blanket. . . ."

Most of the boy's trouble seemed to stem from a tense home situation. His mother was mentally dull and fiercely possessive toward him; his European-born father was harsh and sometimes brutal. The boy seemed unable to find a safe spot between their conflicting demands.

Whatever the causes were, they seemed to go away by themselves. The father, for reasons of his own, gradually became calmer, kinder and more gentle. At the age of 8½ the boy still had problems: He was a troublemaker in school and was doing poorly in schoolwork. But he hadn't made a suicide attempt in three years.

A doctor asked him what he would ask if he had three magic wishes. The boy showed that he now shared some normal American dreams. His first wish was to be famous, his second, to have lots of money. His third wish was to live forever. □



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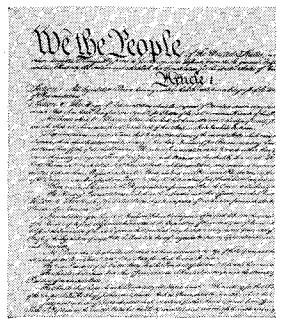
Editorial

'Let's forget the First Amendment'



Sen. Joseph Tydings is right, we believe, in his warning on page 10 of this issue against the dangers of summoning a new constitutional convention. The Supreme Court was right, we believe, in ruling that election districts must reflect the number of people who live in them, that they should be organized to follow the general principle of one-man, one-vote, and that the local governments' failure to do so was depriving millions of Americans of their voting rights. If any right is basic to our political system, it is the right to vote equally and to be equally represented in government. The idea of calling a constitutional convention to overrule that Supreme Court decision seems an obviously bad one; the idea of such a convention having the authority to rewrite any or all parts of the Constitution seems even worse. Until recently, the prospect of such a convention appeared so remote, and the dangers so self-evident, that we didn't even think it worth discussing. But precisely because of people like us, because of our silence or indifference, a determined collection of lobbyists, rural representatives and ultraconservatives has got a large number of state legislatures to vote for the convention, and just a few more such votes might make the convention mandatory. As Senator Tydings says, the time has come to speak out against this drift.

Far from needing an overhaul, the Constitution seems more in need of understanding and support, particularly the Bill of Rights. Back in the McCarthy Era, all too many people acted as though the Fifth Amendment, which was devised to protect citizens against unfair interrogation and imprisonment, were a devious trick to prevent the "exposing" of Communists. Nowadays, when the country is bitterly divided over the Vietnam war, it is the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech that is drawing the most fire. It was chilling, for instance, to read the accounts of Rep. F. Edward Hébert, a Louisiana Democrat, questioning Assistant Attorney General Fred M. Vinson Jr. about why opponents of the draft had not been put in jail.

"A great deal of the Constitution is intended to protect minorities and dissenters," Vinson said.

"We have been made aware of that in the past few years," Hébert said. "How can the [Stokely] Carmichaels and the [Martin Luther] Kings stand before the American people and incite violation of the law while the Justice Department stands idly by?"

"No one has been prosecuted because the department felt no one has violated the law..." Vinson said. "Any law that deals with utterances must be read in the light of the First Amendment."

"Let's forget the First Amendment," Hébert said. "I know this [prosecution] would be rescinded by the Supreme Court, but at least the effort should be made. It would show the American people that the Justice Department and Congress were trying to clean up this rat-infested area."

The First Amendment will not easily be forgotten. In a mere 45 words, it states several of our most important rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." It states these rights not only succinctly but unequivocally. There is no hedging or qualifying, no warning that we must pray only to respectable gods or speak only respectable thoughts or complain about the Government only in respectable ways.

One of the most terrible aspects of this war, and perhaps of any war, is that it is slowly and inexorably corroding Americans' sense of who they are and what America is. It should be a proud and self-confident society, proud of its freedoms, its diversity, its energy and prosperity, confident in its own justice, and in the justice of its elected leaders. Today, more and more, it is a confused and self-doubting society, one in which the leaders and the led mistrust each other, one in which honest differences of opinion turn into slanders and insults. To support the war is to be accused of "killing our boys"; to oppose the war is to be accused of "letting down our boys." Such charges, almost unthinkable a few years ago, now are smeared on placards and carried around by demonstrators, who are ready to attack rival demonstrators on sight—and even, as happened recently, to attack innocent bystanders.

It has always been moot whether we could succeed in our proclaimed goal of "saving" Vietnam by the force of American arms. As that goal continues to elude us, as the military continues to demand more troops and the level of fighting continues to rise, there will also be an increase in the pressure to conform, to rally around the flag, and to punish all dissenters, regardless of what the Constitution may say. The test, both abroad and at home, is not only whether we can combat dictatorship but also whether we can defend freedom.

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